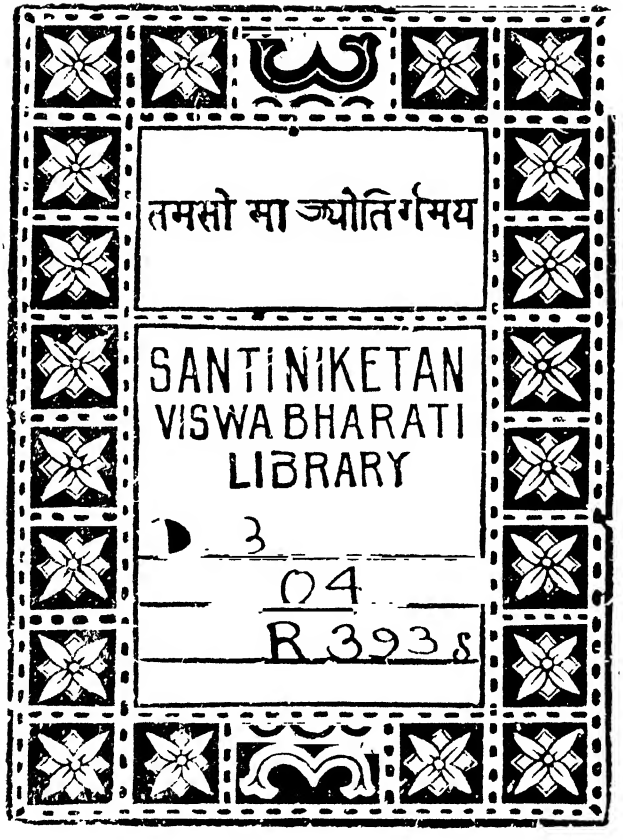
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THE SUPREMACY OF SPIRIT

The Supremacy of Spirit

By
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PREFACE

In November 1919 the Cambridge University Press published a book written by myself and entitled *Spiritual Pluralism and Recent Philosophy*. Shortly afterwards it was suggested to me that I should attempt to write a less detailed and less technical account of my theories, which might perhaps be of some interest to a wider public than that consisting only of people concerned with philosophy professionally.

After some hesitation I decided to make the attempt, and this book, the completion of which has been considerably delayed by pressure of other work, is the result. The greatest difficulty with which the writer of a book such as this is faced, is the difficulty of making himself readily comprehensible to the general reader without sacrificing that logical and technical soundness apart from which he is helpless before his fellow philosophers, to whose attack the publication of any book of any kind may naturally expose him. I have without doubt fallen between two stools on many occasions, and must beg for tolerance.

Whatever general practical interest this book may have, will probably lie mainly in the later chapters. The first chapters deal with the

development of a general philosophical theory. They are altogether essential for the purpose of the book, for I do not see how it is possible to form any definite opinion on such questions as the relation of mind and body, and the survival of bodily death, except in the light of some philosophical theory of the true nature of reality.

The theory put forward in the sequel is essentially the same as that defended in *Spiritual Pluralism*. Since the latter was published, such criticisms of it as have appeared have not been of a nature to cause me to modify my views in any important way. The most serious objections to my theory were put forward in the critical notice in *Mind* (Jan. 1921); but as they were based on a failure on the part of the writer of the notice, doubtless through my own lack of clearness, to understand the position I adopted (especially in regard to the nature of time), these objections were not very helpful from my point of view. The same writer accused me of oscillating between pluralism and monism; but there never was any question of such oscillation, for if there *were* one thing which I said clearly, over and over again, in *Spiritual Pluralism* (and I have repeated it in this book), it was that *neither* a pure pluralism *nor* a pure monism is an adequate theory of reality. We necessarily start from some kind of pluralism, but must sooner or later supplement it by taking account of the monistic aspect of the world, in an endeavour to find a theory which reconciles the one and the many. In contrast to all

this, I should like to mention the review which appeared in the *Philosophical Review* (Sept. 1921), the writer of which had evidently been at special pains to enter into my point of view. Consequently those criticisms on matters where we disagree, which appeared in the review, were particularly valuable to me.

Those who are sufficiently interested in anything they may read in *The Supremacy of Spirit* to pursue in greater detail the theories there advocated, I may perhaps refer to my larger work *Spiritual Pluralism*. I have given references to the latter on a few of the more important points discussed in this book. Both books deal mainly with the Many—the community of individual spirits. I hope, as a natural sequel, to pass on now to a consideration of the nature of the One.

I am glad to have this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtness to Mr. J. Y. T. Greig, of Armstrong College, who was kind enough to aid me with the revision of the proof-sheets.

C. A. R.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne
March 1922.

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THE history of the human race consists in its advance from the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge. But the miracle lies not so much in the advance itself, as in the fact that humanity was ever impelled to make it. The instinct of curiosity is, in fact, the most persistent and pervasive of human motives. In the earlier days of the race it was a necessary condition of survival. Primitive man had to know the habits of the animate and inanimate things which constituted his immediate en-

vironment. Not content to wait upon chance, he proceeded to investigate for himself. Frequently the results were disastrous, but his tentative and blundering efforts were the beginning of a triumphant march wholly beyond his power to conceive.

With the development of his powers of rational thought, Man's curiosity became directed in a continuously increasing degree to matters beyond his immediate purview. No longer content to observe the fragment of the Universe directly confronting him, he wished to envisage the Universe as a whole, and to determine its real nature. There is in every human being, in a degree which varies with the individual, a natural tendency to speculation and an attraction towards the marvellous—that is, the novel. To each one of us come moments of quiet reflection, or, mayhap, of strenuous demand, in which we ask ourselves what it all means.

The average man who thinks at all about these things usually forms by degrees a more or less coherent body of opinions the general trend of which depends largely on the particular way in which he has been brought up. All new facts and new theories which come to his ears are tested in the light of these preconceived "opinions." The latter consist of beliefs which

may of course be true or false. Frequently they deal with matters on which the person concerned is not qualified by training to judge. Hence they must be carefully distinguished from knowledge. It is not easy to explain exactly what we mean by knowledge. It is perhaps most simply defined as the awareness of truth, or better, of true propositions. We cannot legitimately speak of "false" knowledge. A *belief* may be false; it becomes a part of knowledge only when it is a true belief.

The knowledge we possess can be expressed in a body of propositions varying in obviousness between the extremes of self-evidence and utter obscurity. "The sky is blue," and "Two and two make four," are examples of the most obvious kinds of propositions. "A given cissoid is the first positive pedal of a certain parabola with regard to its vertex" is an example of a proposition which, though true, is far from obvious. It can be shown, however, that every true proposition known to us is ultimately based on facts of which we are immediately certain. Such facts are of two kinds, namely the direct deliverances of sense-experience, and those fundamental logical facts to which we give expression in such "laws" as those of Contradiction and Excluded Middle. It is necessary to pause

here a moment, however, in order to guard against a possible misunderstanding. We are immediately certain, we said, of the deliverances of sense-experience. But surely, it may be urged, the existence of illusion and hallucination contradicts this. By no means. The objects perceived in hallucination are just as real for the person who perceives them as the objects he normally perceives. The only difference is that whereas the perception of the latter is shared by other people, the perception of the former is not. Hence a different explanaton of them must be sought. But this does not affect their reality, though they do not of course afford us information about the external world of the kind afforded by those objects the perception of which is common to everybody.

The world we perceive by means of the senses provides us with the raw material of knowledge. At our level of development it is very hard to realize how very raw this material is in itself; for we habitually regard it in the light of certain laws or principles of order without realizing, unless we stop to think, how gradual and laborious has been the process by which these laws have been discovered in the past. To the young child, the medley of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and contacts, which streams before his

attention must at first appear a confusion of novelty almost entirely devoid of any internal harmony or orderly sequence. In the course of a few years, however, he discovers that in reality law and order are universally prevalent in the external world.

The child is only repeating in the course of a few brief years the experience of the race through ages of development. But it is a very long step from the recognition of the existence of laws to the discovery and precise formulation of those laws. It is to this uncompleted task of discovery that men continually bend their energies, driven on by the eternally restless impulse to bring the whole universe within the grasp of human might and endeavour. Now the task of discovery has a twofold aspect, namely a How ? and a Why ? In the first place, we want to know *how* things, animate and inanimate, behave, and how to describe their behaviour in the simplest possible way. This is the appointed task of the special sciences, the most fundamental of which are astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology. The broad generalizations of these sciences constitute the so-called "Laws of Nature". But the majority of people cannot remain content with this. The ordinary man may read

scientific and quasi-scientific books by the dozen on all kinds of subjects, but at the end he will probably be left in a state of considerable bewilderment. "What," he will be inclined to ask, "is the real connection between all these facts and groups of facts? and how are they all to be explained?" In other words he, like most of us, desires most urgently to know what is the ultimate explanation of the Universe and of the beings that compose it. The discovery of such an explanation is the task of philosophy. Nor should it be forgotten that a complete explanation must include within its scope not only what, following common usage, we have called the "external world," *i.e.*, the world we perceive, but also ourselves, the percipients, and other beings like us.

It was pointed out that the raw material of knowledge comes to us through the channels of sense, the direct deliverances of which constitute one realm of certainty. Reflection on this material, and imaginative manipulation of it, are the simplest forms of the *thinking* process. In the course of this process we abstract certain aspects of what we perceive, for special consideration. These abstractions then become in their turn objects of thinking of a higher order. This development of thought may be carried

on to a degree of complexity limited only by the finite capability of the human mind. Logic, the other realm of certainty, here provides the rules of the game. The results of our thinking are valid only so long as our reasoning is carried on strictly in accordance with principles of inference which are logically sound.

We saw that there were two motives for thinking about things. In the first place, we find that life becomes much simpler if we can *describe* the behaviour of things by means of comparatively few general formulæ, instead of having to regard every thing as a law unto itself; and, secondly, our nature is such that we cannot rest satisfied unless we have what we call an "explanation" of everything. The process of abstraction above referred to is the first step in the required simplification. We distinguish and select certain similarities, differences, and other relations between the things we perceive. But this alone will not help us very much; we must go further, and search for relations between our abstractions before we can formulate general laws sufficiently comprehensive to serve a useful purpose. These relations are generally far from obvious—they cannot be discovered simply by inspection. Consequently it is necessary to fall back upon one of the chief instruments of scien-

tific and philosophic progress, namely hypothesis. A hypothesis is a postulated explanation or description. We say, in effect: "Let us suppose that so-and-so is the case, and see how it works in practice in accounting for facts already known, and in leading to the discovery of new facts." Such a hypothesis is not, of course, selected in a purely arbitrary fashion: on the contrary it will be *suggested* by the known facts. A hypothesis, then, is tested firstly by the number of facts already known that it is able to account for, and secondly, by its power to predict facts, the existence of which can be verified by observation and experiment. These two groups of facts constitute the "evidence" for the hypothesis. As the number of these facts increases so does the probability of the truth of the hypothesis increase also. But it is most important to remember that one fact contradicting the hypothesis outweighs all the facts supporting it, no matter how numerous the latter may be. We may alter hypotheses to suit facts, but we cannot alter facts. Hence the most we can say about a hypothesis is that it is more or less probable; we can never say that it is certainly true, for we can never be sure that no new fact will turn up to contradict it.

An admirable illustration of the development

of a hypothesis, and of the typical points of strength and of weakness characteristic of hypotheses in general, is afforded by the Law of Gravitation. This is one of the most far-reaching and accurate generalizations of science. In the early days of scientific thought, which proceeds at first by the abstraction of simple observed similarities from the totality of perceived phenomena, it would be noticed that all bodies are alike in their behaviour in the respect that they fall to the ground if unsupported. Hence the existence of an attractive force between the earth and bodies near its surface was inferred. This is a qualitative generalization; to be of practical use it had to be put in quantitative form. The first attempt at this was the statement that the rates of fall of bodies to the earth is directly proportional to their masses. It was clearly demonstrated by Galileo, however, that this hypothesis did not fit the facts. Exact experiment showed that, neglecting the resistance of the air, all bodies fell at the same rate. It followed that the force with which the earth attracts a body is proportional to the mass of the body. This is a correct, though limited, generalization. The next step consisted in the formulation of a wider hypothesis which included the more limited one. This was accom-

plished by Newton who, with the sudden and inspired flash of insight which is the mark of true genius, grasped the essential similarity between the tendency of an apple to fall towards the earth, and the tendency of the moon implied in its revolution about this planet. Newton boldly asserted that the attraction observed between the earth and other bodies was a universal characteristic of matter. In other words, he said that every body in the universe attracted every other body. Quantitatively, he postulated that this attraction was directly proportional to the masses of the two bodies, and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. This is the famous Law of Gravitation. It was suggested by known facts; it had to be tested by its ability to account for other known facts and to predict new facts. The first test was passed when it was found that the new law explained the motions of all the bodies of the solar system. An opportunity for passing the second test offered itself in 1840. It had long been known that the motion of the planet Uranus exhibited certain irregularities which could not be entirely accounted for by the disturbing influence of the other known planets. An Englishman, Adams, and a Frenchman, Le Verrier, set to work, simultaneously

and independently, to find the cause of these irregularities. They postulated the existence of another planet, till then unknown, as the source of the disturbance. On the basis of the law of gravitation, the position of this hypothetical planet at a certain time was calculated. At the time fixed upon, the face of the sky was closely searched, and the new planet was discovered almost exactly in the predicted position. The importance of such a confirmation of the law of gravitation could hardly be over-estimated; but the end was not yet. We remarked above that even a single fact, if it contradicted a hypothesis, was sufficient to invalidate that hypothesis. Uranus was not the only puzzling member of the solar system. There were also certain discrepancies which had never been accounted for between the observed and the calculated motions of Mercury. Astronomers could hardly believe that the Law of Gravitation was wrong, yet no satisfactory explanation of the irregularities, on the basis of that law, could be found. But very recently it has been shown, as a result of the researches of Einstein and others on Relativity, that the law is, in fact, not quite accurate. Newton supposed that the attraction between two bodies was a function only of their masses and their distance apart.

However, it now appears that their relative motion also enters as a factor, though its effect in all known cases, except that of the motion of Mercury about the sun, is so small as to be practically unobservable. Accordingly the Law of Gravitation now has to be stated in a modified form which is considerably more complicated than its original form. There could be no better illustration of the fact that, however, strong the evidence for a hypothesis, we can never be *quite* sure that it is absolutely true.

The Law of Gravitation is thus an admirable example of the strength and the weakness of hypothesis. Moreover it brings out an important distinction, namely that between explanation and description. Like all the generalizations of science, this law is descriptive, for it merely states how bodies actually *do* behave in certain respects, without explaining this behaviour. It is true that, as usually stated, it introduces the concept of Force, which might appear at first sight to provide an explanatory principle; but actually, so far as physics is concerned, the idea of force is but a convenient fiction, invariably represented by the product of mass and acceleration. Hence the law of gravitation is nothing more than a description of the way in which bodies move relatively to one

another. If a hypothesis is to *explain* anything, it must do more than this. We may defer the question of explanatory hypotheses, however, for later consideration.*

. When we leave the standpoint of natural science, which aims at description, and adopt the standpoint of philosophy, which aims at interpretation and real explanation, we must be prepared to make a radical change in our way of looking at things. The only method to adopt is to rid ourselves completely of all our preconceived ideas and prejudices, and make a fresh start by going right back to the original source of knowledge. The reason for this will become clearer as we proceed, for we shall see how hopelessly vague and confused are current popular opinions on philosophical problems, such, for example, as those of Free Will and Immortality. Yet it is in just such questions as these that absolute precision is an indispensable necessity, if any satisfactory result is to be attained. In pursuing our inquiry we must therefore make it our aim to formulate the problems which will face us, and the hypotheses with which we shall endeavour to meet those problems, with rigid exactness, making use of

* For further consideration of the question of hypothesis, cf. the author's *Spiritual Pluralism*, pp. 12 ff.

no terms to which we cannot assign a definite and unambiguous meaning.

Now the source of all knowledge is the experience of individuals. Hence there is only one way to begin, and that is by examining the individual experience, not only as it stands at its present level of development, but also in the light of its past history and growth. A closely allied line of inquiry is that which deals with the development of the experience of the *race* in the course of untold ages.

What is a man's experience? It is simply his whole life from his own point of view, i.e. the stream of his perceptions, images, thoughts, feelings, movements, desires, and volitions. Now one of the first things which strike us when we come to think about our own experience, which is evidently the only one to which we have direct access, is that it involves two factors, namely the "I," or *subject*, who perceives, wills, imagines, etc., and the things which are perceived, willed, imagined, etc., which make up what is usually called the *object* of experience. We commonly express the relation between subject and object by saying that the object is "cognized by" or "presented to" the subject. We shall have more to say later with regard to the connection between the three factors involved

in experience, namely the subject, the object, and the presentational relation.

The way in which we experience the object is radically different from the way in which we experience ourselves. Although in both cases there is immediate awareness of something real, yet the mode of awareness is not the same in both cases. I am *acquainted with* the object (which is not identical with me), but, to use a term which the writer has employed elsewhere in this connection, I "*realize*"* myself, for I *am* myself. I cannot be acquainted with myself or with any other subject of experience as I am acquainted with, say, a patch of red that I perceive; nor could I become identical with the patch of red so as to realize it as I realize myself. In other words, subjects, by their very nature, can never be objects; and, for a similar reason, objects can never be subjects. Hence a subject has quite a different *type* of being from that of an object—a very important point which will meet us again later.

The most primitive form of experience is sensation. This is invariably associated with two other components, namely feeling and

* Cf. *Spiritual Pluralism*, pp. 13 f. and elsewhere. Prof. Alexander, if I do not misunderstand him, uses the term "enjoy" in a sense identical with that of my word "realize." Cf. his *Space, Time and Deity*, Vol. I., p. 12, *et passim*.

movement, for a sensation always gives rise to pleasure or pain (rarely to absolute indifference), and hence to movements directed towards retaining or removing the sensation, as the case may be. Sense experience is thus the root from which all experience grows, and it therefore provides, as we have seen, the raw material of knowledge. The patches of colour, scraps of sound, etc., presented to the subject in sensation, we call "sense-data." The subject discriminates different sense-data by means of the movements of *attention*. In this way the development of experience begins. It proceeds (also by movements of attention) by the synthesis of these sense-data into unified groups or "percepts." For example, the first time a young child is confronted by an orange it may distinguish the smell and the colour as separate and disconnected elements, while later on it will combine them together with other elements, such as taste and touch, into a single percept "orange." Perception is thus the second stage in the growth of experience. Attention, which plays such an important part in its development, is a fundamental factor in all experience, as a moment's reflection will show. The movements of attention are in the first place determined by interest—we notice what interests us.

The sense-experience stage reaches its climax in the development of imagery which is involved in memory and, later, in free imagination. Up to this level experience is essentially private. The sense-data and the images of an individual are peculiarly his own property: he cannot communicate them in their actuality to anyone else. Indeed, he cannot even communicate them by description, for no two people can be sure that in any given case they have similar sense-data just because the latter are called by the same name. Thus my sense-datum which I call (say) "red" might well be quite different from your sense-datum which you call "red." Think how impossible it is, by the very nature of the case, for one person to describe "red" to another. To comprehend "red" as it actually is, it is necessary to experience it. Yet it follows from the fact that we do use names in common, that somehow or other different individuals do manage to connect their experiences in an orderly way. Otherwise, indeed, life would be an endless confusion. This connection is accomplished by means of language and gesture, and only becomes possible, therefore, when the social stage of evolution is reached. Its establishment proves, not that the sense-data of different people are similar, but simply that to

certain definite sense-data of one person there will, in suitable circumstances, *correspond*, one to one, certain definite sense-data of one or more other persons. When I point to a tree and say "green," my companion, looking in the same direction, will see something which he also calls "green." This however, does not prove that what he sees is similar to what I see, but only that to this special sense-datum of mine there corresponds one, and only one, special sense-datum of his. Thus the existence of a common name indicates correspondence, not similarity. Therefore, when two people are, as we say, "looking at the same thing," there exists what is called a *one-one correlation* between their sense-data. What exactly this "same thing" is, we shall have to consider later; for the moment it is sufficient to emphasize these two most important characteristics of sense-data, namely their essential privacy, and their correlation as between different individual experiences.

If, then, I take any element of my total object of experience, such as a sense-datum (e.g. a patch of colour, or a musical note) or a percept, i.e. a unified group of sense-data (e.g. a flower, or a table, or a book), I find that certain elements in the experiences of other people correspond

to them. This is true not only of sense-data and percepts, but also of the various relations between them. An important consequence of this is that we come to think that in reality there are things independent of any particular percipient, the sense-data and percepts of particular individuals being merely particular "aspects" of these realities. Whether this belief is justified in any way, and if so, in what way, are questions with which we shall shortly have to deal. As it stands, without qualification, the belief is evidently an inversion of the real state of affairs, for the realities of which we are certain are our own private sense-data, while our ideas of independent things are mental constructions based on the reflective abstraction of elements from our experience and on the fact of the correspondence found to obtain between these elements and certain elements in the experiences of other people. Actually, therefore, these more or less generalized ideas or "concepts," as they are called, are no more than symbols of the correlations which exist between different individual experiences; but they have great practical value, for they enable us to catch and hold, as it were, certain portions of the changeful stream of our presentations, and hence to discover by reflection the

relations which subsist not only among these portions themselves, but also between them and portions of the experiences of other people.

The preceding discussion was a necessary preliminary to our main business, namely the attempt to discover a satisfying *explanation* of the Universe—a sufficiently ambitious (if not indeed presumptuous) aim. But the results of that discussion should make it sufficiently clear that the correspondence which exists between different individual experiences indicates, not that different people have similar sense-data, nor even that the relations between one person's sense-data are similar to the relations between another person's sense-data, but only that the relations which hold within the experiences of different persons are of the same *type*. Bearing this in mind, we may now proceed to consider the various ways in which modern philosophy has dealt with the great mysteries of existence. To aid it in its task, philosophy calls in the help of all the special sciences, for all facts lie within the scope of its inquiry. At the same time, it endeavours to interpret the results of the sciences, and to determine just how far, and in what direction, those results take us. The co-operation, through

interaction, between science and philosophy is therefore profound, and has always proved one of the most fruitful sources of the advancement of knowledge.

CHAPTER II

MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Relation between philosophy and science—They spring from a common origin—More rapid progress of science—Scientific beliefs more easily tested—Advances in philosophy—Materialism —Its basis—Man's conquest of the material world—How to find a place for life and mind?—Evolution and Natural Selection —The philosophy of Herbert Spencer—The "Unknowable"— Development of philosophic materialism—Differing views of nature of consciousness—Materialism unable to bridge the gaps between matter and life, and life and mind—Starting from matter we can never reach mind—Contradiction developed by the duality of the scientist's point of view—Recent developments in philosophy of science—Physical entities not inferences from, but constructions of, sense-data—The decay of materialism and the rise of Neo-realism—Account of the latter—Belief in existence of sense-data independently of perception—This considered untenable by the writer—Sensation as mental act or process of which sense-datum is the form—Appearance— Metaphysical developments of Neo-realism—Attempts to extrude the subject of experience—Reasons for their failure— The types of metaphysical spiritualism—Absolute Idealism— Appearance and reality—"Adjectival" and "Substantival" being—Degrees of reality—Objections to Absolute Idealism— Error and illusion—Reality and truth—Relation between individual experiences and the absolute experience—Blankness of the Absolute—Absolute Idealism as Spiritual Singularism— Spiritual Pluralism—Reality and substantial existence of the plurality of individual minds, subjects, or spirits—Leibniz and his Monadology—Contrast with Locke and the empiricists— The "windowless" monads and Pre-established Harmony— Account of the type of spiritual pluralism to be adopted as our hypothesis—Subjective or spiritual activity and its characteristics—Cognition, feeling, conation—Plasticity and retentiveness—Relation of mind and body—Continuity of mental development in the individual and in the race—Continuity of behaviour through all the realms of Nature, animal and

vegetable, animate and inanimate—Corresponding continuity of mental development—Mind everywhere present—Matter can be interpreted in terms of mind—Necessity of supplementing pluralism by the conception of a single, universal, immanent entity—Experience and subjective interaction—Our philosophic hypothesis differs in type from scientific hypotheses.

At the close of the previous chapter we noted the intimate relationship between philosophy and what is now-a-days called "natural science." The two branches of enquiry had, indeed, a common origin, for in early times no distinction was made between them in the course of the search after truth. Looking back upon primitive thought, we find the germ of the philosophic impulse in the attempts made to get beyond particular observed facts by means of very wide generalizations: but these generalizations were expressed in terms of physical things. The dictum of the Milesian philosopher Thales—"Everything is really composed of water"—is a typical illustration of this. In the later stages of Greek thought, however, the gradual disentanglement of philosophic enquiry from numerous other lines of thought, concerned rather with natural science, was completed, and with the advent of Plato and Aristotle the systematic study of philosophy proper may be said to have been definitely launched.

In view of the foregoing it may seem strange that, while natural science has made continuous

progress at an ever increasing speed and now possesses as its capital a large store of knowledge accepted by everyone as substantially true, philosophy, on the other hand, is characterized by the fact that there are the widest differences of opinion on nearly every question among its exponents. But there is an obvious reason for the comparatively rapid progress of science and the general acceptance of most scientific beliefs; namely that nearly every newly discovered scientific truth has an immediate practical value and is attended by empirical success. In short, the scientist can at once test the truth of his beliefs by direct experiment, the philosopher cannot. Thus Einstein proclaims his belief that a ray of light is deflected by a gravitational field, and with but little delay the crucial experiment is made and the truth of his belief confirmed; Bergson proclaims his belief that the impulse of a single Life-force evolved and sustains the whole realm of animate Nature, but how is his belief to be tested by experiment? Einstein, as scientist, is concerned with phenomena; Bergson, as philosopher, with the reality manifested by phenomena. Phenomena are matter of direct observation, but the reality underlying them cannot be directly observed.

It must not be supposed, however, that phil-

osophy is entirely unprogressive. On the contrary very considerable advances have been made, not only in the critical elimination of false elements from the great systems of the past, but also in the constructive accumulation of demonstrable truths and especially in the improvement of philosophic method. Yet, in the end, philosophy, in so far as it is true to its task, must remain largely speculative, while science serves as a valuable corrective to the course of speculation. The effect of this corrective function of science is to be seen in the series of climaxes and fresh beginnings with which the path of philosophic development is strewn. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the pioneers who have inaugurated new eras of philosophic thought have almost without exception been men of considerable scientific attainment. Sometimes indeed, as, for example, in the case of Descartes, they have been scientists or mathematicians of the highest degree of eminence. But for all that it should not be forgotten that science, in its turn, must submit to the scrutiny of the philosopher so far as the ultimate validity of its fundamental concepts and principles is concerned.

The influence of current science on current philosophy provides an explanation of the fact

that one of the most important theories of modern philosophy (including under that heading the thought of the last half of the nineteenth century) is the theory which commonly goes by the name of "materialism." For it is in the realm of matter that science has made such vast strides in enlarging the borders of human knowledge. Accordingly it was to the material universe that men looked to provide them with the key to the riddle of existence. Matter they began to regard as supreme—the one reality from which all else, including mind, was produced. For the moment we must defer consideration of the exact nature of the distinction between "mind" and "matter", though it is a point which will shortly be seen to be of very great importance, for it is over that very distinction that materialism ultimately comes to grief.

The essential basis of last-century materialism was the Atomic Theory. This theory dates back in one form or another to antiquity. It was elaborated during the period when Greece was the intellectual centre of the world, and finally given coherent scientific expression by the philosopher Democritus. The latter regarded our sensations as the illusory appearance of things which rational thought compels us to

believe to be really atomic in structure. This view, at any rate so far as matter was concerned, continued to be held in varying forms by scientists until the beginning of last century, when it was given quantitative form by the chemist Dalton. On Dalton's Laws the whole of modern chemistry, prior to the discovery of radio-activity, was, in fact, based. Matter was conceived as ultimately composed of excessively minute particles—"atoms"—these being perfectly hard and impenetrable, and possessing inertia. In addition, in order to account for such phenomena as gravitation and cohesion, it was necessary to regard the atoms as centres of force. It will be observed that the properties thus ascribed to the ultimate indivisible particles of matter were of the same type as those observed to belong to perceptible masses. To account for the action of masses upon one another when at a distance, the existence of an all-pervading medium—the "ether"—was postulated, in which the atoms were imbedded. The motions of the atoms, and the forces to which they gave rise, were supposed to be transmitted by the ether, the former as vibrations, the latter as states of strain. In this way *all* action was reduced to contact-action. When the vibrations impinged on the sense-organs of a living

being, they were conveyed by the nervous system to the brain, where they mysteriously gave rise to "sensations." Again it must be noted that the properties ascribed to the ether, e.g. elasticity, were not of a new kind, but were of the same type as, though more perfect in degree than, the properties of matter.

Meanwhile centuries of patient observation and experiment, becoming progressively more exact, had reduced man's knowledge of the bewildering variety of phenomena to something like order. The discovery of general principles rendered it abundantly clear that the external world was a cosmos, not a chaos. The existence of law was everywhere apparent. The culmination came with Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation. In the light of this law—the expression of that all-pervading influence which binds every particle of matter to every other particle, however remote—the universe presented the appearance of a mighty mechanism. In the first instance this was true only so far as bodies of perceptible size were concerned, but the atomic and molecular theories extended the conception of mechanism to the very small as well as the very great. Beyond the range of the microscope, as beyond the range of the telescope, it was assumed that the mechanical formulæ, of

which the law of gravitation was perhaps the most striking example, still held good. The time was almost ripe for the launching of a fully fledged materialistic philosophy.

Almost, but not quite; for it still remained to find a place for life and mind in the scheme of things. If the universe were really mechanical through and through, how was the kingdom of the living, with its amazing wealth of variety and spontaneity apparently poles asunder from the mechanism of inert matter, to be accounted for? What appeared to be the key to the problem was at last supplied by Darwin. His great principle of Evolution by Natural Selection provided for continuity throughout the realm of life. According to this theory, all kinds of living creatures had evolved from a single primordial form of life by a continuous process of adaptation to their environment. As the latter varies from time to time and from place to place, development proceeded along many different lines. The process of adaptation to the inanimate environment was then supplemented by a struggle for existence among the forms of life thus differentiated, the conditions of the struggle ensuring that, both as between different species and also as between different individuals of the same species, only the fittest should survive.

This is the principle of Natural Selection. It will be seen that, in itself, it is essentially mechanical in type—an automatic process implying only material conditions and activities. Whether Natural Selection alone is sufficient to account for evolution and its results is a point with which we are not for the moment concerned. Suffice it to say that the success which attended the application of the principle to the explanation of certain biological phenomena was sufficient to constitute it a highly important factor in the construction of the philosophy of materialism.

In this country the prevailing tendencies were finally crystallized into a philosophical theory by Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of evolution. He extended the continuity which the principle of evolution brought into the animate world downwards into the realm of inanimate matter and upwards to include fully conscious beings. According to his teaching, the history of the universe consists in a series of recurrent cycles. At the beginning of a cycle there exists a single unstable, homogeneous medium. This is the matrix whence everything we know is produced. By reason of its instability it gradually differentiates itself, in the course of ages, into a more and more complex heterogeneity. There emerge in succession, inorganic

matter, organic matter, living forms of every kind, and, finally, conscious beings of higher and higher types. But at some stage of the process a turning-point is at last reached, and a converse process of devolution sets in, the universal medium returning finally to its original homogeneous form, when the cycle begins again.

Ultimately, however, Spencer was constrained to postulate the existence of an unknown and unknowable reality behind the phenomena we perceive. He cannot therefore be classed as a materialist, but rather as an agnostic. But it was on his theories that philosophic materialism was largely based, although it dispensed with his doctrine of the "Unknowable," and regarded matter and ether (which, as was pointed out previously, is really material in type) as the sole realities. Nothing occurs but more or less complex motions and configurations of the ether and the atoms of matter, all changes taking place in accordance with certain fixed principles, such as that of the conservation of energy. Living organisms were regarded simply as peculiarly complex aggregates of molecules, so that according to this theory the difference between animate and inanimate bodies was one, not of kind, but of degree alone. If the molecular structure of an organism's brain and

nervous system reached a sufficiently high degree of complexity, consciousness made its appearance. At this point, however, there was a split in the ranks of the materialists, some of whom regarded consciousness as a necessary factor for the control of an organism that had become too complex and unstable to continue to work automatically through a series of reflex actions and adjustments, while others held that consciousness was a mere flickering accompaniment of certain material processes—an "epiphenomenon" (to use their term), and, as such, quite incapable of interfering causally with the course of those processes, serving only passively to mirror the latter. But in spite of these differences, all were agreed on the fundamental point that mind or consciousness was in some sense or other (on which they were not very clear) the "product" of matter.

Such, in essence, was the gospel of materialism. Few people hold to it in that form now-a-days. For, even if we accept its own point of view (which, incidentally, is not ultimately a valid one), it contains a fatal flaw. In spite of Herbert Spencer's efforts, the gap between conscious and unconscious beings and the gap between the living and the non-living, were never really bridged. The reason for this is clear. Within

the mighty mechanism envisaged by the materialists, the only changes possible would be changes in the arrangements, or patterns, of the atoms. Such changes could evidently not themselves provide the basis for the appearance of properties of an *entirely new type* unless the existence of some additional, unknown characteristic of the atoms were postulated. But to postulate such a characteristic would be to destroy the very basis of materialism, for the unknown quality might turn out to be mental or spiritual in nature. Now it is clear that the characteristic qualities of mind are essentially different in kind from the qualities of the atoms of matter as defined by the materialist, nor do material qualities, as such, include or imply any element whatever which might serve as a basis for the production of entities so entirely novel in type as individual minds. But reason demands that the conditions which determine the evolution of any particular product should have at least *some* congruence with that product. Could anything, however, be more incongruous than matter (with its associated element, motion) and thought and emotion, with their creations in the realms of literature, science, art, and religion ? This incongruence constituted the fatal defect in nineteenth-century material-

ism, for it rendered the latter incapable of supplying a philosophy of the *whole* system of reality. The materialist would probably retort that man and all his works form a mere insignificant and ineffective fraction of that system ; and it is true that, judged by the purely material standards of space and time, man and his works sink into insignificance beside the incomparable vastness of the stellar universe. But this is beside the point, for the creations of man's mind must necessarily be judged, as to their worth in the scheme of things, by the standards appropriate to them, which are certainly not those of space and time. Who could possibly hold, for example, that there is anything intrinsically " greater " in an expanse of space or of time, than in (say) a poem or a symphony ? The contemplation of such a comparison, indeed, brings out with sufficient force the fundamental incongruence, noted above, which thorough-going materialism is bound to entail. Starting from matter, we can never reach mind.

But there is another, and equally fatal, objection to the crude materialism we have been considering. We stated previously that the point of view of materialism is not ultimately a valid one. We will now give our reasons for that statement. The position of the man of science

is one involving a curious duality. As a man he lives in the world of experience—the world of sights, sounds, and other sense-data in which we all live—the world of perceptible things. As a scientist, on the other hand, he lives in a world of countless tiny particles, quite imperceptible to his senses, namely the hurrying, whirling crowd of atoms, molecules, and electrons. In the routine of everyday life the realities for him are the sounds, colours, and so on which he directly perceives, the thoughts which he thinks, and the movements which he makes. But when he begins to theorize, he regards all this as a mere veil which hides from him the true reality—the "mazy dance of the electrons." Obviously there is a grave difficulty here. For we cannot doubt the reality of the things we directly perceive. There they are, and that is all there is to it. Even a hallucination is real for the person who perceives it. When we say that it is illusory, we simply mean that the perception of it is not shared by other people, or, if it is a collective hallucination, that it does not conform to all the laws which usually govern phenomena. But the fact remains that the certainty we have of the existence of what we perceive is of an altogether higher order than any grounds we may have for believing in the existence of

such entities as atoms and electrons. What, then, is the real nature of the connection between these two worlds, the world of physics and the world of sense?

The average man of science, if he is not given to philosophizing, would reply somewhat as follows: "Our sense-impressions, though real enough in their own way while they last, are the transitory, and often illusory, effects on us of relatively permanent material bodies which are ultimately composed of minute, absolutely permanent, particles. The last are the true realiites of the external world." But this reply is not a satisfactory one. For by what assumptions are we warranted in inferring from our sense-impressions, which *prima facie* carry evidence of the existence of nothing but themselves, the existence of the material bodies and material particles of which the scientist speaks? Yet the statements of science must have some true meaning, seeing that they lead to results which are empirically verifiable and practically valuable.

Such considerations as these have finally led to a complete overhauling of the philosophy of science, and its reconstruction on a new, and far more satisfactory, basis. The chief exponents of the new theories are Dr A. N. Whitehead and Mr Bertrand Russell. The question these

philosophers asked themselves was this: What are we really referring to when we make statements (a) about ordinary material bodies, such as tables and chairs, and (b) about the objects of physical science, such as atoms and electrons? It is neither possible nor necessary to consider here the course of the investigation in detail. For that, recourse must be had to the works of the authors themselves.* Here we must be content with a brief summary of the results reached. Since all true propositions about the external world are based on perception, and since the results to which these propositions lead can be verified only by an appeal to perception, it follows that the said propositions, however general and abstract they may seem to be, must really refer to the sort of things which are directly perceived, namely sense-data and the happenings among sense-data, i.e. events. Moreover, it also follows that, unless they can be shown, by sufficiently thorough analysis, to be really built up from sense-data, the propositions and concepts of physical science cannot be truly valid. We thus have a doubly valuable result; for not only does it provide us with a rational theory of the nature of scientific concepts, but

* Cf. Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World* (especially Lectures III. and IV.) and Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, and *The Principles of Natural Knowledge* (*passim*).

also with a criterion of their validity. The general conclusion arrived at is, then, that all statements about the material world, whether couched in ordinary language or in scientific phraseology, are really assertions (albeit tremendously condensed and abbreviated) about sense-data. To take a simple example, consider what such a proposition as "This table is square and brown" really means to you. Clearly it is nothing more than a statement about your sense-data and about the sense-data which other people will perceive when they are in a certain situation. So far as anything we may say about it is concerned, the table is a certain group or class of sense-data, and not some entity additional to the latter and outside experience. The same is true of the concepts used in physics, such as "point," "instant," "particle," or "electron," although such concepts are more complicated functions of sense-data than ordinary material bodies such as tables and chairs. That they *can* be exhibited, however, as functions of sense-data (or, more exactly, of "events") more or less complex in form, has been sufficiently demonstrated by Dr Whitehead. But it must not be supposed that it follows from this new philosophy of Nature that there can be nothing behind the veil of phenomena. On the

contrary, the theory merely asserts that, even if there be something beyond sense-data of which the latter are somehow the effects or products, science tells us nothing whatever about it. Science tells us, in a conveniently ordered and abbreviated way, only about the nature of what is perceived. In other words, atoms, electrons, and so on, are not *inferences* from what is perceived, but *constructions* built up therefrom.

It is abundantly evident from the foregoing, that anything in the nature of nineteenth-century materialism must finally go by the board. The new theories have, indeed, given rise to a type of philosophy peculiarly their own, and known as Neo-realism. This philosophy, though it originated in the United States, is finding a considerable number of supporters in the ranks of English thinkers; but its supporters, both here and in the United States, differ very greatly indeed on questions of detail. The cardinal tenet of the theory, however, on which most Neo-realists are agreed, is that sense-data exist quite independently of being perceived; this patch of red (for example) at which I am now looking will (they would say) continue to exist altogether independently of me when I am no longer looking at it. The external world consists of a great number of particulars, such as patches of

colour, scraps of sound, etc., to which the name of "sensibilia" is given, *capable* of being perceived (in which case they become sense-data), but not *necessarily* perceived. The presentation of a sensibile to a percipient subject is an incident which does not affect the being or the nature of the sensibile in the slightest. The theory does not, of course, deny the possibility that other entities may exist besides sensibilia and the minds that perceive them, but if they do we can know nothing about them.

To the present writer, the fundamental proposition of Neo-realism, viz. that sensibilia exist independently of being perceived, appears quite untenable. It is not possible here to go fully into the objections that may be urged against that proposition.* But it may be pointed out that, although it is convenient, for purposes of thought, to isolate a sense-datum from the mind that perceives it, it is not actually separable in this way; just as, although in thought we separate the shape and the size of a body and discover true propositions about the one which do not involve the other, actually they are inseparable. Sensation is, in fact, an act or process of the mind in which the particular sense-datum

* I have criticised Neo-realism in detail in *Spiritual Pluralism*, Cf. Chapter I. *passim*, and Chap. III., pp. 92-103.

perceived constitutes the particular form which the process is then taking. Doubtless this form is partly determined by entities external to, and independent of, the perceiving mind, but evidently it cannot itself be separated from the process of which it is the form, so that it is partly dependent for its being on the mind. It is thus part of the very essence of sense-data to be perceived, so that we cannot assume the existence of entities (viz. sensibilia) essentially akin to sense-data with the exception that they are not necessarily perceived. Sense-data belong to the realm of appearance. This does not mean that they are not real, for they are real appearances. But an appearance is not only an appearance *of* something—it must also be an appearance *to* someone. Hence sense-data must depend in part for their being on being perceived. Moreover, there are other difficulties in the Neo-realist theory. It fails to give a satisfactory account of imagination or of error, nor is its system of separate independent sensibilia adequate to explain the gradual growth of the individual sense-experience, which consists essentially in the moulding of a unified whole, and is not a thing of shreds and patches. We shall have more to say, however, about the nature of sense-experience later in this chapter.

There is a certain direction in which Neo-realism has shown a tendency to develope which it is of more immediate importance for us to consider. As we have seen, the new philosophy of Nature has shown that the real ultimate constituents of matter, using the term "matter" in the sense in which physical science uses it, are not hypothetical "electrons," but sense-data. The latter are the very stuff of which matter is composed. In developing a philosophical theory on this basis, certain thinkers have gone to extremes by trying to reduce the whole world about which we have knowledge to sense-data alone, extruding the notion of percipient minds or subjects as an unnecessary metaphysical concept that is at most a mere construction of sense-data. A theory of this kind really constitutes a new form of materialism, the material being not atoms, as in the older materialism, but sense-data. An individual experience is thus regarded as a series of sense-data, images, etc., the supposed "subject" who cognizes these being merely a name for the objective relation in virtue of which the sense-data, etc., form a single individual series. At this point we might justifiably inquire as to the nature of the concrete basis on which this relation is founded; in other words, just why do the sense-data in question fall into

this special series and no other? But, in any case, it is quite impossible to extrude the subject of experience in this way. In the first place, the Neo-realists contradict themselves in attempting to do so. For, as previously pointed out, their main contention is that sense-data are independent of perception. But this implies that there is a real distinction between a sense-datum and the perception thereof, which is evidently impossible according to the theory we are now considering. Quite apart from this consideration, however, we have no grounds whatever for regarding the subject as anything but a real concrete entity. My reality as a subject is, indeed, a fact of immediate experience for me. It is true that I am not *acquainted* with myself as I am acquainted with sense-data, for evidently I cannot by the very nature of the case be an object of contemplation for myself. On the contrary, I "realize" my own nature and existence, or, to use Prof Alexander's term, I "enjoy" myself, for I *am* myself.* Conversely, I cannot realize the nature of any other existent as it really is in itself, for I cannot identify myself with it; I cannot become "internal" to it, as it were. I can cognize it only "externally,"

* Cf. *Spiritual Pluralism*, pp. 13 and 18 ff. for a fuller exposition of this point.

i.e. I can be acquainted only with its *appearance* or manifestation to me. For this reason, sense-data, seeing that we are acquainted with them, cannot be regarded as concrete substantial existents, but only as the appearance of the latter; they might be termed "externalities"—mere outward seeming, as opposed to true inward existence.* Evidently, then, the attempt to get rid of subjects in favour of sense-data as the sole realities of which there is any awareness is an attempt to give up the substance for the shadow. Physical science, dealing, as it does, with phenomena, i.e. appearance, can eliminate the subject for its own special purposes, but philosophy cannot. It is one of the chief aims of philosophy to achieve a synthesis of all the different types of experience, not only those included in the comparatively restricted field of physical science, but also those which constitute, for example, the spheres of art, morals, and religion.

Leaving now those theories of the nature of reality which are essentially materialistic in type, we may turn briefly to consider the systems of modern philosophy which may fairly be said to interpret reality in the light of the notion of mind or spirit. That these systems differ con-

* *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 101, 196.

siderably from one another on matters of detail goes without saying. But there are also certain broad differences traceable between them as regards the underlying principles in accordance with which they are constructed. Here we can consider only certain forms which may be looked upon as typical. Of these, one of the most clearly marked is that generally known as Absolute Idealism.

The Absolute Idealism of to-day is the direct descendant of the philosophy of Hegel; but in the course of its descent it has been greatly, and in some respects, indeed, fundamentally, modified. Briefly, the central principle of this school of thought is that spirit, or, as modern idealists prefer to call it, experience, is the sole ultimate reality. Reality, it is held, must be essentially rational in structure, and must therefore be ultimately constituted by a whole of experience which is internally coherent and harmonious, and free from any element of contradiction. Now if we consider the experiences of individuals such as ourselves, we find, it is contended, that distinctions emerge which frequently issue in contradictions. Difficulties which arise in connection with space and time—e.g. are they bounded or unbounded, infinitely divisible or not ?—afford typical instances of this.

Accordingly, we must regard individual experiences as but partial aspects or expressions of ultimate reality, and therefore as only partially real. The idealist thus makes a fundamental antithesis between appearance and reality, regarding the former as infected with contradiction, and distinguishing ascending degrees of the latter consisting in experiences in which the contradictions are transcended and reconciled to an ever-increasing extent. In that supreme experience which is the sole ultimately real being, all contradiction disappears; it is a complete, rationally coherent, self-existent whole—an *absolute* experience (it is commonly called "The Absolute") as contrasted with the *relative* experiences which are its partial and fragmentary aspects. The latter, which include, it should be remembered, the experiences of human beings, are not truly real; they are merely expressions or characteristics of the Absolute, and have therefore only what has been called an "adjectival" type of being, as opposed to the "substantival" existence of the Absolute. It is sometimes supposed, by the way, that the latter is identical with God, but this is not so. For the God of religion and of the ordinary man is a personal being, whereas in the Absolute one of the distinctions which is resolved and trans-

cended is that between subject and object, a distinction on which personality is fundamentally based.*

Now it must be admitted that the theory we are considering is a very attractive one. The unification which it effects, by its insistence on the principle that the partial experiences carry with them the implication of the absolute whole and cannot be adequately comprehended except in the light of that whole, no less than its confidence in the essential rationality of the structure of the universe, cannot fail to make a very strong appeal to every speculative thinker. Indeed, there cannot be any doubt that Absolute Idealism contains the expression of some very real and fundamental truths. Taken as a whole, however, the system cannot stand the test of criticism, for there are certain objections to it which are sufficient to invalidate it as a completely accurate and self-consistent account of the nature of reality.

In the first place, it is doubtful if the conception of degrees of reality has actually any meaning. Degrees of *truth* we may admit, for there seems to be a very important and significant sense in which we can speak of a proposi-

* Cf. A. E. Taylor, *The Elements of Metaphysics*, for a recent typical exposition of Absolute Idealism.

tion or a body of propositions as being partly true and partly false. But an entity (not a proposition) must be either real or not real: there is no intermediate condition. Even if we say that it is partly illusory, the illusory part is yet a real illusion. This is not a mere quibble, but simply an indication of the fact that the term "illusion," like the term "appearance," is a much abused one. There is no illusion until we begin to make judgments about the entity. The illusion lies in the relation of the judgments to the real nature of the entity: it is not, and cannot be, an intrinsic characteristic of the entity itself. Similarly, it is meaningless to speak of an experience as being internally contradictory. Contradiction is a relation between propositions, and has no meaning apart from propositions. We cannot significantly say that portions of experience are contradictory, for each portion stands on its own merits, as it were; it is only the conclusions we draw from experience, which are expressed in propositions, that may be contradictory; and this arises not from the nature of experience, but from the fact that it is impossible to make generalizations that are certainly true. If the sun did not rise to-morrow, this would not constitute a contradiction within experience. The ex-

periences which constitute for us the rising of the sun or its failure to rise are equally real. There would be nothing in their natures or relations which could lead us to regard them as partially unreal. All that would follow from this unusual behaviour on the part of the sun would be the falsity of the generalization "The sun rises every day," and as we make the generalization, *we* are to blame and not experience.

But there is another, and still more serious, difficulty to be urged. This arises in connection with the relation between the supposedly partially-unreal individual experiences and the one ultimately real absolute experience. For while, if we start from the former, we can in some measure conceive of a single all-embracing experience which somehow includes and synthesizes the partial experiences (though the conception is by no means an easy one), the matter is altogether different if we start from the Absolute itself. In practice we are evidently bound to begin with the different individual experiences, for, so far as we are concerned, these are the actual realities, the Absolute being, for us, a conception, and nothing more. But in theory, so far as Absolute Idealism is concerned, it cannot avoid basing the final ordering of its account of the Universe on the Absolute

Experience, for it regards this latter as first in the order of reality ; as, in fact, the only truly real existent. But if we start with the Absolute as the sole ultimate reality, we can never get to the various individual experiences ; for the perfectly self-consistent, self-existent, self-sufficient Absolute contains no ground for the emergence into being of the self-contradictory, partially unreal, individual experiences. Absolute Idealism, in fact, can give no reason whatever, in terms of its ultimate reality, why these partial experiences should exist at all. It therefore leaves unsolved all problems arising out of the latter. A typical example is the problem of the existence of evil. The absolutist would say, of course, that evil is mere appearance, an element in the experiences of finite individuals, characteristic of the contradictions which arise therein. But even if evil be but appearance, then the appearance is itself painful (and therefore evil) in a very real sense. The fact is that the fundamental antithesis which the Absolute Idealist makes between appearance and reality is not a valid one. Attention was drawn to this point in our first chapter. The true antithesis is that between appearance and existent, not that between appearance and reality, for appearances are real enough.

Finally, the Absolute shows a disconcertng tendency to cancel itself into a blank nothingness. We do not seem able to predicate anything whatever of it, for in it all distinctions are supposed to be reconciled and transcended. Therein is neither space nor time, neither subject nor object, neither good nor evil. Hardly then can it be regarded as an experience, for all that makes experience living and concrete is gone, leaving a blank unity, empty of all content. Like the polar opposites of Schelling, the elements distinguished within the experiences of individuals rush together in the Absolute into a supremely ineffable nothingness.

There is, however, another type of philosophical spiritualism, the consideration of which has been intentionally postponed till the end of this chapter, as one form of it seems to be the most satisfactory working hypothesis to adopt of the true nature of reality, and accordingly we shall take that particular form of the theory as a basis from which to proceed in dealing with the problems that await our consideration. We will first of all briefly trace the historical development of the theory, and then proceed to elucidate at somewhat greater length the special modification of it advocated.

The essential characteristic of Absolute Ideal-

ism we saw to be the stress which it lays on the ultimate reality of the one absolute being as contrasted with the ultimate unreality of the many finite individuals. For this reason it is sometimes termed "Singularism." In systems of the kind we are about to discuss, on the other hand, a cardinal feature is the assertion of the true reality of the Many. These are regarded as possessing, not merely adjectival being as characters or aspects of a single real existent, but real substantival existence in themselves. Such a system, therefore, constitutes a spiritual "Pluralism." To that great mathematical and philosophical genius, Leibniz, we owe the first definite and coherent expression of this way of thinking, the consequences of which he worked out with wonderful precision and logical insight in that remarkable work, *The Monadology*. In the first place, he adopted a view of the nature of mind or spirit diametrically opposed to then current conceptions. The English empiricists, of whom Locke was a typical example, had given wide vogue to a theory which regarded the mind as essentially a passive receiver on which impressions were made by objects external to it. Leibniz, with a surer recognition of the real nature of experience, started from the fact that it is the

essence of mind to be *active*. For him, reality consisted in an infinite multitude of individuals, conceived as unitary, indivisible forces or agents, psychic in nature, to whom he gave the name of "monads." These psychic beings exhibited every degree of mental development from the highly complex mind of man, and of beings of still higher order ("angels"), down to a type of mentality of so low an order that it can be described only as a mere flash of consciousness—a *mens momentanea*, as Leibniz called it. In this hierarchy of minds he postulated complete continuity of the various levels of development: there were no sudden jumps from one level to another.

Each monad was considered to "mirror" the rest of the universe from its own particular "standpoint." Thus the perceptions of each constituted the appearance to it of all the others, in a form partly conditioned by its level of development. But at this point Leibniz was faced with a difficulty. His monads, as he conceived them, were independent reals, there being no ground of connection between them. But how in such isolated, self-enclosed, "windowless" monads (to use Leibniz' term), could there possibly arise the appearance of the rest of the universe? Leibniz could get over the difficulty

only by including God in his scheme of things. He regarded the universe as embodying the working out of a plan existing in the mind of God, by whom the monads were created. Each monad contains within itself the principle of its own development in complete independence of all the other monads; but, at creation, the potential developments were synchronized in such a way that, as the order of phenomena unfolds within a given monad, it exactly represents, at any instant, the condition of the rest of the universe at that instant. This is the famous doctrine of "Pre-established Harmony." Leibniz illustrates it by the analogy of the clock-maker who sets a number of clocks going so as always to keep in time with one another, although there is no connection between them.*

In spite of the fact that it contains obvious difficulties on matters of detail, considered as a whole Leibniz' system is a truly great conception worked out with a logical insight worthy of its greatness. It has played a pre-eminent part in the shaping of all subsequent systems containing a pluralistic element, i.e. an emphasis on the substantial reality of the Many. The development of such systems has, for the most

* It is impossible, in the space at our disposal, to do justice to the genius of Leibniz. Those interested should consult Robert Latta's excellent translation (with notes) of his works.

part, taken the form of a gradual removal of those parts of the original structure which involved contradiction, these being replaced by fresh principles.*

We may now proceed to consider the theory of reality which seems most adequate as an interpretation and explanation of the world as we know it. In our account, the words "monad" and "spirit" will be used as synonymous with "subject of experience." The term "mind" is somewhat wider in scope, and includes not only the subject himself, but also the objective content of which he is aware. It really means, as will be apparent later, a subject acting in determinate ways. The term "self," on the other hand, though it is sometimes used as synonymous with "subject," more strictly refers to a certain part of the content of experience. But we must leave this point till a later chapter.

As we are endeavouring to express our interpretation of the universe in terms of spirit and its activity, it is necessary, at the outset, to be quite clear as to the nature of the fundamental characteristics of spiritual activity, or mind, so far as we can elucidate them from our own immediate awareness. In the first place, we

* The foremost living exponent of modified pluralism is James Ward. Cf. his book, *The Realm of Ends, passim.*

can distinguish three phases of a psychosis (or state of mental activity), albeit the three are not *actually* separable but closely interwoven into what is really a unitary process. Firstly: cognition, whether it be the awareness of sensations or of movements, of images or of concepts. Secondly: feeling, of pleasure or of pain. Thirdly: striving or conation, away from painful objects and towards pleasurable ones, both "external" (e.g. sense-data), or "internal" (e.g. images and thoughts).* Moreover, the growth of experience manifests the existence of two most important qualities of mind, viz. the power of learning by experience and the tendency to form habits, the two evidently being closely connected. In other words, the mind is both *plastic*, i.e. capable of adapting itself to new situations and of spontaneously initiating novel ways of acting in order to deal with them successfully, and *retentive*, i.e. capable of retaining what it has learnt by consolidating the successful train of action into a more or less automatic process, thus forming a habit. Here we have the basis of all progress and development.

Keeping these considerations in mind, we

* Cf., for example, James Ward, *Psychological Principles*, chap. II., for a discussion of the psychological points involved here.

shall find the primary clue to the true interpretation of reality in the relation of the subject to his body, from which he is of course distinct. This provides a problem which falls for later consideration. But there is one obvious feature of it which is quite sufficient for our present purpose. This consists in the fact that the relation is a dual one. For not only is the subject from one point of view "external" to his body (metaphorically speaking), seeing that he perceives most of it just as he perceives other foreign bodies, but also, from another point of view, he is "internal" to it, for he acts in and through it in a way to which his relation to other bodies provides no parallel. Therefore, when he perceives, among the bodies around him, some which not only look essentially similar to his own but also behave like it, he is surely justified in assuming that such bodies manifest the existence of other beings who are subjects essentially akin in nature to himself. Having taken this step, in thought (and it is an immensely important one), he is well on the way to a satisfactory interpretation of the world of phenomena, as we shall now see.

If we reflect upon the human race, we are struck by the point on which Leibniz insisted, namely the continuity between the different

degrees of development of the individuals composing it. We may look at the matter in the light of the growth both of the individual and of the race. If we consider the life of a human being from earliest infancy to maturity, we note an absolute continuity of development from the most vague and confused perceptions to the highest flights of imagination, intellect, and delicate sensory discrimination. Moreover, it is also apparent that no lower limit of mental development can be assigned at which consciousness may be said definitely to begin—a most important point. Again, if we take the race, not only do we observe the existence, at the present time, of persons and of peoples of indefinitely numerous levels of development which shade gradually into one another, but also, if we select any nation, however highly civilized, we can trace back its continuous evolution from primitive human beings of most inferior mentality. Nor does the continuity cease here. These primitive human forms merge insensibly into the higher animals, such as the anthropoid apes, and from the latter we can trace continuity again right down through the animal kingdom. The vegetable kingdom has a continuity of its own, but it also links up with the main stream through the lowly beings,

the protista, which are distinctively neither plant-like nor animal-like alone, but rather a combination of both, and from which the vegetable and animal kingdoms spring as twin stems. We come at last to the simplest form of life, the cell, and beyond that to organic substances which are not organisms (though they are the stuff thereof), and finally to inorganic substances, the last two types comprising what we ordinarily call "inanimate matter." But we find no definite breach of continuity from inorganic, through organic and protoplasmic, substance to the cell-organism, which contains the potentiality of all life.

Now the point is this: As we observe continuity of behaviour throughout all Nature, we are justified in assuming, at the very least as a working hypothesis, a continuity of mental development behind all natural phenomena, from mankind down to the very sticks and stones. That is, we may regard all natural phenomena as the manifestation to us of an indefinite multitude of spiritual agents (subjects, or monads) differing continuously in degree and in kind of mental development from ourselves down to a most rudimentary form of consciousness far below even the level of our own earliest confused perceptions and actions so far as we

can recollect them. We are not asserting that a stone, for example, has a mind in the sense that one's body has a mind, but rather that what we call the stone is the appearance to us of a number of minds not acting co-operatively with one another as in the case of an organism. Leibniz, indeed, regarded a body, such as a stone, not as an organism, but as a mere collection of organisms (like a flock of sheep), and he extended this conception indefinitely. Thus, to take one of his examples, he considered every drop of water in a pond full of fishes to be itself a pond full of fishes, and so on *ad infinitum*. The distinction between animate and inanimate matter is thus simply the distinction between organized and unorganized mind.

In view of these considerations, the point is, then, that we have no right to regard any stage in the order of Nature as being the stage at which mind begins. On the contrary, we are compelled to look upon mind as inherent in all Nature, in the form of countless spiritual agents. Moreover, this conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the lower we go in the scale of life, the less spontaneity and original initiative do we find, and the more automatism and fixed routine. But the latter is simply what we ordinarily call "habit," and it is an inveterate

tendency of mind to form habits. Hence, the conformity of "inanimate" matter to certan well-defined laws is explained easily enough by supposing that the psychic agents of which it is the appearance are of so inferior a type that their behaviour is sufficiently habitual to admit of description almost entirely in general terms, these general descriptions thus constituting what we call the "laws of Nature." But we cannot, of course, assume that there is absolutely no spontaneity present, and it has been frequently pointed out that as we are here probably dealing with individuals in bulk, our "laws" are in the nature of statistical averages which exhibit great uniformity in spite of original variations in the case of individuals. Furthermore, uniformity is the more to be expected here, for, where minds of inferior type are concerned, such variations are, as has been pointed out, for the most part conspicuous by their absence. Hence, though we could not get from matter (as defined by the materialist) to mind, we can get from mind to matter. A material mechanism can never be made to grind out mind. On the other hand, mechanism is the lower limit of mind, which the latter approaches indefinitely but never reaches.

All this, however, assumes that our monads

interact—otherwise they could not appear to one another. A mere pluralism, therefore, will not suffice, for it does not contain the *ground* of such interaction. We must supplement it by postulating the existence of a single entity universally *immanent* in the monads, and thus constituting the ground of their interaction. In virtue of this they constitute, not a multiverse, but a universe. The conception of this immanent entity is not an easy one, and it is not our purpose to elaborate it here, but there seem to be good reasons for regarding it as essentially spiritual, and not only spiritual, but also personal*, in nature, as we hope some day to show. But for our present purpose it is sufficient to postulate its existence, without speculating as to its nature.

Experience thus consists in the interaction of the subject with other subjects. Every subject acts on every other, and, what is the same thing, reacts to the influence of the others. Sensation is therefore the reaction of the subject to the action of other subjects. The particular sense-datum involved is simply the particular form which the reaction takes. It is determined not only by the nature of the subject in question, but also by that of the other

* For the exact meaning of "personal," cf. chapter V. below.

subjects with whom he is interacting. Hence we are justified in calling it the "appearance" of the latter to the former. But it will now be clear why we are unable to regard the being of a sense-datum as independent of the existence of the subject who perceives it. For such a view would involve the separation of the *form* of the subject's activity from the active subject himself, which is plainly impossible.

It will be seen that a hypothesis such as the one we have outlined differs fundamentally in type from the hypotheses of natural science. The latter *describe*, in the simplest terms, the sequences of phenomena, and all the terms occurring in them refer to phenomena alone, or functions thereof. But the former is a hypothesis as to the nature of the existent—the reality behind phenomena—and it is expressed, not in terms of things we perceive but whose inner nature we cannot realize, but in terms of entities the essential nature of which we realize concretely, for we are ourselves examples of such entities. Such a hypothesis may be regarded as truly explanatory and interpretative.*

In the brief, and very far from exhaustive, account of modern philosophy that has been

* Cf. *Spiritual Pluralism, passim,* especially chaps. I. and II., for developments of the theory.

attempted in this chapter, we have confined our attention to problems of ontology (i.e. the nature of the existent) for the most part, dealing only incidentally with problems of epistemology (i.e. the nature of knowledge). But enough has been said to show that one of the main tendencies of recent thought is to break down the old clear-cut distinctions, such as that between mind and matter, by exhibiting them as constituting different aspects of the same thing rather than as being existentially distinct. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that the one type of entity which must be retained, in the monism to which we are tending, as the sole type of real existent, is essentially spiritual in nature, and not material.

CHAPTER III

THREE GREAT PROBLEMS

Space-time, immortality, and freedom, three fundamental problems—Space as conceived by physics and commonsense—Objections to space thus conceived—Actually it is conditioned by the objects which "occupy" it—Development of the idea of space in the individual experience—We do not perceive space, but spatiality—Space therefore an abstraction—Experience not in space, space is rather in it—Subjects not in space, though they perceive it—The ordinary notion of time—Difficulties analogous to those in the case of space—We perceive temporality, not time—Neither the object nor the subject of experience is in time—Private spaces and times—How related—Public space and time—Space and time abstractions from a single continuum, space-time—Einstein and relativity—Our conclusions confirmed by recent physics—Immortality and time—The human spirit, even if temporal, not necessarily annihilated by bodily death—But it is not temporal—Yet spiritually we change and grow—Time implies one kind of change but change need not imply time—True change implies permanence—We ourselves combine permanence and change—We are immortal in transcending time—Immortality of little value without freedom—Distinction between "determinate" and "determined"—The notion of determinism is bound up with that of successful prophecy—A deterministic universe in this sense must be a temporal universe describable quantitatively—This cannot apply to man—Determinism in a somewhat different sense—Even this does not apply to man, who is therefore free—Freedom, more or less limited, must be predicted of all subjects of experience, for each is unique—Summary of this chapter.

THE three classical problems of philosophy are those of the existence of God, Immortality, and Freedom. It is not our purpose to consider

the first of these. Though the answer to the question "Is there a personal God?" is of prime practical importance to humanity, that question will assuredly be the last to be answered decisively by philosophy. For this problem we shall accordingly substitute another, which, although lacking the practical urgency of the former, is yet fundamental for the philosopher. This is the problem of what, for reasons that will be clear in the sequel, we must now call "Space-time." The problem of the nature of space-time, seeing that it has a vital bearing, not only on the general nature of existence, but also on special questions such as Creation and Immortality, is really logically prior to the problem of the existence of God.

Let us first consider the common notions of space and time, beginning with space. The ordinary man, so far as he thinks about it explicity at all, generally regards space on the analogy of an indefinitely large vessel, or container, in which material objects move and have their being. The chief ingredient in space, as he conceives it, is the quality of *extension*. He commonly accepts space without question as existentially separable from, and equally real with, the material objects which (as he says) it *contains*. Until comparatively recently, the

majority of physicists also regarded space as a real existent, independent of the objects which "occupy" it. The physicist, however, is interested in space not so much as an extended something, but as a mediator of certain kinds of relation, namely those of position and distance. Such relations hold between those extremely hypothetical entities, points. For the physicist, then, space in itself is a continuum consisting in a vast assemblage of related points.

Now it requires but little consideration to make it clear that these views of the nature of space are infected by serious objections. In the first place, they are open to the grave difficulties urged by Kant, which may be summed up in the questions: "Is space finite or infinite in extent?" and "Is space infinitely divisible or is there a limit to its divisibility?" But this is not all. Take the ordinary man's conception of space as an extended something containing material objects. Now try to think away everything which space contains, including light and movement. What is left? "Extension," it may be replied. But *what* is then extended? We find, indeed, that in the process of eliminating the contents of space, space itself has disappeared. Nor are we in much better case if we take instead the physical concept of space. For distance has

no meaning except as relative to a measuring scale, which is a material object. Position, again, can only be specified as position relative to some object. It cannot even be specified as relative merely to a certain point, for points are qualitatively distinguishable only by reason of the different objects which "occupy" them. In other words, space, in so far as it enters into such sciences as (for example) physics and astronomy, presupposes a measuring scale and also what is called a "frame of reference," that is, a convenient body or system of bodies to which the positions and distances of other bodies may be referred.

We can only conclude, therefore, that the idea of space as a real thing existing independently of the objects which are ordinarily said to "occupy" it, is not tenable, for we have seen that space, whatever it may be, must at any rate be fundamentally conditioned (and therefore dependent on) those very objects. To determine the reason for this, we must turn, as always, to experience, and try to discover what it is that gives rise to the concept of space.

It is evident, in the first place, that we have no perception of space apart from the perception of sense-data or of material objects, that is, we have no perception of "empty" space. It

is true that we form the *idea* of empty space, but this is nothing more than an abstract conception based for the most part on the experience of unimpeded movements of the body and limbs. The assertion of the existence of empty space really *means*, then, nothing more than that it is found that unimpeded movements can only occur in the absence of certain sense-data of sight and touch, or, in more usual language, in the absence of material bodies related to the percipient's body in a certain way—in such a way as to "interfere" with his movements, as we say. Thus the concrete realities actually perceived in experience are the movements and the sense-data, and not some other entity in addition to these to which we may give the name "space." But although we do not perceive space as an independent entity, we certainly *do* perceive something else, namely certain special qualities of, and relations among, sense-data. The surfaces which we see and touch have a peculiar quality of size or voluminousness which we may call "extensity." They also stand to one another in certain peculiar relations which we call by such names as "above," "below," "behind," "to the right of," etc. Now it is clear that neither these relations of "position" nor the quality of extensity can have any con-

crete existence (though they are, of course, present as ideas in our minds) apart from the sense-data which they characterize, any more than the shape and size of a body can exist concretely in separation from it. What we really perceive, then, as forming part of the external world, is not some independent, self-existent entity—"space"—but rather what may be called "spatiality," this being simply a name for the special properties of sense-data just mentioned. We only arrive at our conception of space as an extended network of relations by *abstracting*, in thought, the spatiality of objects from the objects themselves, just as we may think about (say) colour or hardness by itself, without implying thereby that it has a concrete existence independently of the objects which it characterizes.

Space, therefore, is not a real existent, but an abstraction. We may continue, however, to use the phrase "in space" for convenience, provided we remember that by it we simply mean that the things to which it is applied are spatial, i.e. possess those properties which constitute what we have called "spatiality." We saw that the latter involved two factors, namely a certain quality and certain relations predicable of sense-data, i.e. *parts* of the object

of experience of an individual. Now consider the *whole* object of any given individual experience. Can we say that it is spatial? Obviously we cannot, for although it may be said to be extended, it lacks the other necessary element, namely relations of position. The parts of the total object of experience are spatially related (some are to the right, or to the left, of others, etc.) but the object, taken as a whole, *includes* all these relations and is thus not itself related to anything in the same way. Experience, we may therefore say, is not in space, but rather space is in it. It is comparable in this respect to a bucket of water—everything within the bucket is in water, but the bucket is not itself in water.

What, then, of the individual monad, or subject of experience? Is it in space? The case here is clearer still. If the subject were in space, we should be able to make such statements as "this part of the subject is to the right of that part," and so on, which would obviously be absurd, for the subject is an indivisible unity, and not a whole of parts. Subjects *perceive* space or spatiality—they are not themselves in space.

Leaving for a moment the consideration of space, we may now turn our attention to the

nature of time. And here again, let us begin by discussing the ideas of the ordinary man and of the physicist respectively. The former usually looks on time from a Newtonian point of view as something which flows steadily on, at a uniform rate, independently of the beings which it encompasses and carries along with it like a stream. The difficulties of this view are at once evident. For, in the first place, we must not introduce the idea of uniform rate into the definition of time, for this idea itself implies the concept of time, so that we should thus be committed to a circularity—i.e. we should be assuming in our definition that we already knew the essential nature of the thing we were trying to define. Moreover if we abstract all objects ordinarily said to be "in" time, we find we are left with nothing *to* flow.

Modern physicists have realized the contradictions implied in the Newtonian definition of time. Time is now generally regarded as a one-dimensional continuum mediating the mutually converse relations "before" and "after." It enters as a co-ordinate into physical equations in a manner precisely similar to that in which the space co-ordinates enter. But it must be remembered that in order to assign values to the co-ordinate two things are neces-

sary, as in the case of space, namely a measuring apparatus and something with reference to which to measure. Hence time, even as conceived by the physicist, cannot be altogether abstracted from objects and yet remain something actually existing as an independent entity.

We find, indeed, that what was said of space, also holds good in an analogous way of time. We have no perception of time apart from the perception of sense-data and of material objects. In other words, we have no perception of "empty" time. What we actually do perceive is, here again, a certain special quality of sense-data, and a certain relation between sense-data or other objects of attention. To the quality we give the name "duration;" to the relation, the name "succession." Thus we cannot assert the existence of an independent entity —time, but only that of certain properties of sense-data, etc., constituting what may be called "temporality." The phrase "in time" can only mean that the things to which it is applied have these particular properties.

Although the elements which form the part of an object of experience are temporal, the total object is not temporal. For while it may perhaps be said, in a sense, to have duration, it does not enter as a term in any relation of succession.

Any part of the object is before some parts and after others. But there is nothing that the object, taken as a whole, can be said to be before or after. The object of experience is not in time—time is in it.

Is the subject of experience in time? Certainly we habitually speak as if we (i.e. our very selves, not our bodies) were in time. If this were indeed the case, it would imply that the subject possesses both those characteristics which together we have found to constitute temporality. In other words, if temporal, the subject must exhibit both the quality of duration and the relation of succession. Now it is true that in a certain sense the subject may perhaps be said to be characterized by duration, but it clearly does not exhibit the relation of succession. For such statements as (for example) "This part of myself is after that part" are evidently absurd, especially when we remember that the subject is an indivisible unity and not a whole of parts. Hence the subject is not temporal, i.e. is not in time. But how, then, do we come to make statements which certainly have some true meaning, and yet seem to imply that the subject is in time? The answer is not hard to find. It turns out on analysis that in all such statements the temporal reference is really to

parts of the *object* of experience. For example, if I say "I went to London last Saturday" what I am really asserting is that there is in my object of experience, considered as a whole, a certain group of sense-data which are characterized both by those particular spatial characteristics which for me constitute "London," and also by those particular temporal characteristics which for me constitute "last Saturday." If, however, we were to try to be strictly accurate, and so put all propositions involving a temporal reference in terms of parts of the object of experience, we should evidently be condemned to hopeless longwindedness. We therefore find it convenient to put our statements in a form which seems to involve the temporality of the subjects, though it does not really do so.

We may conclude, then, that the subject is in neither space nor time, though it *perceives* both. Now we must here draw attention to an important point in connection with what is thus perceived. It evidently follows from the privacy of the individual experience, which was emphasized in a previous chapter, that every subject perceives a private space and time of his own, possessing the characteristic qualities and relations to which we have drawn attention. Everyone has his own special point of view, as

it were, which by the very nature of the case is inaccessible to anyone else. These private spaces and times, however, are not absolutely independent and so utterly isolated in every way. For subjects are able to communicate with one another through the medium of gesture and language. In the course of this communication it turns out that, although each subject perceives a private space and time of his own, yet to every element in a private space or time there corresponds one, and only one, element in every other private space or time. For example, suppose a number of people are looking at a book with a red cover. Each perceives a certain patch of red which is spatially extended and stands in spatial relationship to other patches of colour which are perceived at the same time. Now evidently these red patches cannot be identical with one another owing to differences in what we call the "points of view" of the various observers. But the latter can easily show by speaking and pointing that the different patches *correspond* to one another. From this it is an easy step to the belief that all are really observing one object—the "real" patch—of which the different patches are "aspects." But actually it is the other way round. The different patches are the real entities, indubit-

ably present. The single so-called "real" patch, supposedly independent of the different observers, is a construction or a hypothesis inferred from the fact that the many different patches perceived by the different observers "correspond" in the manner we have indicated.

In a similar way, by considering all the elements of the various private spaces and times, hypothetical "public" space and "public" time, common to all observers, can be constructed. But it must not be forgotten that these *are* hypothetical constructions, and not given realities on a par with the sense-data which constitute the private spaces and times. When this is borne in mind, the traditional difficulties associated with the concepts of space and time will be found to vanish.

There is, however, a further important consideration. The principle of relativity, and especially Einstein's work in connection therewith, has made it clear that, even for physics, space and time are themselves abstractions from a single continuum in which they are confluent, and which has been named "space-time." As a result of the preceding discussion, we are now in a position to appreciate why this is so. For we saw that the basic realities for knowledge are the sense-data perceived by

individuals, spatiality and temporality being characteristics of sense-data which may be thought about separately, by a process of abstraction, but which must really be confluent in the sense-data of which they *are* characteristics. The two, in fact, evidently involve one another, for there could not be a sense-datum which had duration but no extension, nor one which had extension but no duration. So far as sense-data are concerned, duration and extension are necessary to one another.

The principle of relativity also confirms the results we have shown to follow from general philosophical considerations by its elucidation of the fact that "absolute" time is meaningless and must be replaced by the concept of numberless "local" times. This fact is, of course, identical ultimately with the fact of the existence of a private space-time peculiar to each observer. This trend of modern physics is deeply interesting and significant. Physics, as we have pointed out, must start with the perceptions of different individuals, but as it progresses its concepts seem to get further and further away from actual experience. With further progress, however, it has been compelled to execute an intellectual somersault, and to return to a recognition of the importance of the particular "point of view"

(which tacitly implies the particular observer) in the scheme of things. This anti-materialistic trend of recent experiment and speculation in physical science is in striking, and almost paradoxical, contrast to the materialistic leanings of the modern behaviourist school of psychology, to which we referred in the last chapter.*

As a result of the preceding discussion of the true nature of space and time we are now in a position to deal with the problem of immortality. For evidently this problem can be attacked with some hope of success only when a definite conclusion has been arrived at regarding the nature of time and its relation to ourselves. Two questions face us. Firstly, do we cease to exist with the decay and ultimate dissolution of that material entity which we call "the body," or do we continue to live under new conditions? and, secondly, if we survive bodily death, what change in the nature of our experience does it herald? Upon what new mode of life do we then enter? In this chapter we shall confine our consideration to the first of these, deferring a discussion of the second till later.

The problem of immortality could only arise for creatures who considered themselves time

* Cf. also Bertrand Russell, *The Analysis of Mind*, Preface, *et passim*.

bound, for entities can evidently begin to exist or cease to exist only if they are beings temporal by nature. Apart from their reference to the stream of time the notions of beginning and ceasing have, indeed, no meaning. But even if the human spirit were a temporal entity, there would be no real reason to suppose that it was annihilated by bodily death. The mind or spirit is not identical with the body. In spite of the intimate association between the two, the body is evidently distinct from the spirit which (as we sometimes say) "inhabits" it. Although my relation to my body is different from my relation to any other body, I can yet perceive it as a material object just as I perceive those other bodies. It is therefore not identical with me. My experience, and therefore my existence, is, in my present circumstances, closely bound up with it, but it by no means follows that apart from it I could have no experience and so could not exist at all.

All this, however, leads only to the negative conclusion that there is no logical necessity for the cessation of spiritual existence at material bodily death. But the argument started with the supposition that spirits, or subjects of experience, were temporal entities. This is not the case. We saw that subjects, while they

perceive objects which are in time, are not themselves in time ; together with the correlative fact that while " bits " of an individual experience may be said to be temporal, that experience in its complete unity is *not* temporal. We dip, as it were, into the stream of time, but are not ourselves parts of the stream. Yet it cannot be denied that spiritually we change and grow. This is the plain verdict of our awareness of self. Does it not imply, then, that we are in time ? By no means. Such a conclusion rests on a fallacy which is too often ignored. It is true that temporality necessarily implies change ; but it is not true that change necessarily implies temporality. For there are two kinds of change. One is mere succession—a succession of elements which may, indeed, exhibit continuity of likeness (as in a " gradual " change such as that of the colours in a sunset sky), but each of which is a particular quite distinct from any of the others. It is this kind of change, namely *succession*, which gives birth to the concept of time. Strictly speaking, it is mere *alteration*—not true change. For the latter implies permanence. An entity can only be said to change, with any real significance, provided it preserves its identity in and throughout the change. Otherwise there is first one thing and then another thing—not

a single thing which changes. This reconciliation of permanence and change, and the manner in which it comes about, is difficult to grasp, nor can it be adequately put into words. Like all ultimate facts, it escapes analysis and discursive expression. But that it can exist we may feel sure, for we are ourselves typical cases in point. We are aware of our changefulness, but we also indubitably realise the preservation of our identity through change. We are not, each of us, a succession of independently existing elements strung out connectedly in some mysterious way. We cannot thus be split up into separate parts. We are single unities, actively functioning, and therefore changing, but maintaining our permanent identity throughout the process of change. Nor is this "process" a whole of parts, but a single individual unity—not a static unity, but a dynamic unity, or rather a unity in which the static and dynamic aspects are confluent. Hence our non-temporality—for we have shown that time, by its very derivation, implies a succession of parts or elements. We are therefore truly immortal and eternal, not in the sense of existing through an infinity of time, but as beings transcending by our very nature the limitations of space and time. We simply exist, and that ends the

matter, for the notions of beginning or of ceasing to exist cannot be applied to us significantly, since "beginning" and "ceasing" imply time.

The above reasoning may, at first blush, appear somewhat flimsy and lacking in practical common-sense; for our thinking is shot through and through with the notion of time, and it is hard for us to shake ourselves free from our imaginary fetters and to realise our transcendence of the temporal realm. Reasoning on such a matter cannot, indeed, for reasons we have pointed out, lead to absolute conviction. But let the reader withdraw his attention from the external world, divesting himself of preconceived prejudices and habits of thought, and, resting simply on himself, as it were, consider how his existence, which is split up analytically by thought into past, present and future, in reality constitutes those three in indissoluble, indivisible unity. In the light of such consideration the mystery of the *living* past and the equally living future becomes clear. For past, present and future, as applied to the subject of experience, have, in their commonly accepted sense, no real significance. His existence cannot thus be divided into sections. It is "gathered up," so to speak, into a single, indivisible, *active* unity. This is the crux of the whole matter. So long as activity

is supposed necessarily to imply time the problem remains insuperable; but when it is realized that activity, in spite of our habitual modes of thought, which are based on a more or less artificial analysis of the object of experience, need not imply time, most of the difficulties vanish. An actively functioning existent may be an indivisible unity just as much as a purely static existent, and temporality, which implies not only mere duration but also succession, cannot characterise such a unity.*

There are good reasons for believing, then, that men are immortal beings in a very real sense, and not mere transitory ripples on the stream of life. Most people would agree, however, that immortality loses much of its value unless accompanied by freedom. Eternal life which consisted merely in a process rigidly and entirely determined by factors external to itself, and independent of the individual concerned, would be a poor thing. This brings us to the third of the great problems we set out to consider.

The problem of freedom has suffered much in the past from the vagueness with which it has usually been stated. Evidently a necessary

*Cf. *Spiritual Pluralism*, chap. VI., for a more detailed discussion.

presupposition of any attempt to solve the problem is a clear understanding of what is meant by being free and, conversely, by being determined. It is simpler to start with the latter conception. In the first place, we must distinguish between the meanings of the words "determined" and "determinate." When we say that anything is "determinate," we mean that it is something definite, and not mere being without any definite characteristics. The word "determined," however, implies much more than this. It implies that the thing in question not only has definite characteristics, but that these characteristics are dependent not on itself alone, but, at least in part, on things other than itself. Evidently, then, the fact that a thing is determinate does not logically imply that it is also determined.* The theory which holds that everything is determined we may call "determinism."

The notion of determinism is generally bound up with that of successful prophecy. If we find that by observing the state of affairs in any given system at certain times we are invariably able to foretell the state of affairs at some future date, we regard that system as determined, and deny to it any internal auton-

* Cf. *Spiritual Pluralism*, chap. IV. (where freedom is discussed), p. 116.

omous principle capable of suddenly changing the appointed course and so upsetting all our calculations. Physics and astronomy furnish us with typical examples of such deterministic systems. From observations, for example, of lunar eclipses or of the positions of the planets of the solar system, we can foretell future eclipses or future planetary configurations with remarkable accuracy. This gradual spread of calculability through the realms of natural science has rendered the problem of freedom acute. The net is thrown wider and wider, and he is an optimist who hopes that the soul of man will eventually escape the meshes. The iron grip of " natural law " is apparently closing round the spiritual, as well as the material, world.

A deterministic universe would, then, be a universe in which it would be possible to infer future events from observations of present events. Notice, in the first place, that this implies a temporal universe ; and, in the second place, a universe capable of description in quantitative terms, for accurate calculation and prediction is only possible on a quantitative basis. On both these counts, however, man is ruled out. For we have seen that he is not a temporal being. Nor is he a quantitative entity. The notion of quantity is only applicable

to things which can be split up into similar parts (such as distances or time-intervals) or to things directly correlated with things which can be split up into similar parts. But the subject of experience is *not* a whole of parts, nor can mental activities such as thinking, perceiving or willing be divided into parts or correlated with anything else which can be so divided. An act of thought, for example, is not made up of little acts of thought. The notion is evidently absurd. Quantitative concepts cannot be applied significantly to subjective or spiritual existence.

There is, however, another, and somewhat different, sense in which an entity may be said to be determined, namely in so far as its nature (both in its static and in its dynamic, or functional, aspects) can be inferred from that of entities other than itself. In so far as the entity in question is *unique*, its nature and behaviour cannot be implied by anything else, and it is therefore to that extent *free*, i.e. not determined by anything other than itself. Here again determination connects up with the notions of calculability and predictability. When we can predict the actions of an individual from more or less *general* considerations we cannot regard that individual as free in the performance

of those actions; but when such prediction eludes us owing to the existence of characteristics *particular* to the individual alone, we are bound to regard the latter as to that extent free, in the only sense in which freedom has any significance.

Now a man, like all other existents, is, to speak loosely, a mixture of the general and the particular. Built on a certain *pattern*, which thus makes him a member of a class, he is yet a unique individual. No two men are precisely alike in character or in behaviour. A man's actions, though partly determined by causes external to himself, yet contain an element which depends solely on something unique in the nature of the man himself, and not capable of being inferred from anything else. It is this element of uniqueness in action which constitutes what is commonly called "the freedom of the will."

On every count, then, we must attribute to man, as subject of experience, the quality of freedom; and, by the same token, we are bound to extend the charter, though in ways variously limited, to all concrete existents; for, as we have previously seen, we must regard all concrete existents as subjective beings (i.e. as having being *for themselves*, and not as con-

sisting in mere " shells " or externalities having being only for others), and all subjects are to a certain extent unique, and this uniqueness constitutes, in its functional aspect, freedom.

We may now briefly sum up the results of this chapter. We began by elucidating the status of space and time. We found, in the first place, that space and time are not absolute. Intsead of a single space and time common to, and independent of, all observers, there turned out to be a large number of spaces and times each one private to a particular observer or subject. The private spaces and times are, however, related to one another in a way which enables different subjects to co-ordinate their spaces and times with one another, and thus to build up a logical construct which is in fact identical with the public space and time of " commonsense " and physics. But when we came to examine the private spaces and times we found that these again were really abstractions expressing certain special characteristics of sense-data which might be called " spatiality " and " temporality." And again, these, if considered separately, are abstractions, for in sense-data they are not separate, but confluent, forming a single characteristic which might be called " Spatio-temporality." Retracing our steps from

this point we should be led to the fact that a more adequate concept for physics than that of two continua, namely space and time, would be that of a single continuum, namely space-time. This is the conclusion to which physicists are now being led, guided by the advocates of the theory of relativity; and, indeed, the conclusions to which we have come are strikingly confirmed at many points by the facts to which the relativists have drawn attention.

Having established the abstract and relative nature of space and time, we were ready to deal with the problem of Immortality. Indeed, the problem had already been dealt with to a considerable extent. For it hinges entirely on the nature of time and its relation to ourselves. Now there is a sense in which we may be said to *perceive* time; and, in passing, we may add that if this perception forces anything on our attention, it is the fact of the relativity of time. For compare an hour spent at a dreary junction waiting for a train, with an hour spent in pleasurable activity. Theoretically the same amount of time, the first, *actually as experienced*, is incomparably the longer. Be that as it may, the fact remains that although we perceive time, we are not "in" time, i.e. we are non-temporal, and are therefore, in the only sense

significant for us, immortal. The fact of our non-temporality is so often overlooked because we are active, and it is felt that activity must imply time. But why should it? Only because our ordinary habits of thought are drenched with the notion of time, and we cannot talk about activity without seeming to imply time. But time cannot subsist without succession, and there is no succession in a unity which maintains its identity while functioning. The subject is such a unity, for in the subject permanence and change, the static and the dynamic aspects, run together and are reconciled. There remains no contradiction in a non-temporal activity, so soon as we realize that an indivisible unity, and not only a whole which is a succession of parts, may be dynamic. In fact the second is not, in any real sense, a single dynamic entity.

Finally, we passed to a discussion of freedom and determinism, and, after endeavouring to make precise the real meaning of these terms, we came to the conclusion that man is free, in the only real sense of that word. We may now go on, in the next chapter, to consider a problem of a somewhat different character from, though just as important as, those we have been considering. This is the problem of the relation of Body and Mind.

CHAPTER IV

BODY AND MIND

The problem fundamental practically, though not logically, ultimate—Theories of the relation of body and mind—Interpretation of these terms—Psycho-physical parallelism—Interactionism—Epiphenomenalism—Its fallacies—Its opposite, viz., one-sided dependence of body on mind—Account given by spiritual pluralism of relation between body and mind—Definitions of these terms—Nature of the organism—The dominant and the subordinate monads—Analogy of an army—Perception—Volition—Assimilation or rejection of food—Breakdown of the analogy—Dominant monad in direct contact with environment—Immanence and transcendence, the dual relation of mind and body—Immanence admits of degrees of completeness—Its growth and decay—Part played by the body in the development of self-consciousness and personality—Explanation of personality—The empirical ego—Dissociation—Perception, memory and imagination—These spiritual functions not necessarily dependent on the body, though necessarily accompanied during life by bodily processes—Mental activity may well continue after bodily death.

THE problem of the distinction between body and mind, and of the relation between them, is not, in respect of logical priority, an ultimate one for philosophy. From the practical point of view of human beings, however, it is of fundamental importance. For a consideration of it is necessarily the first step towards the solution of a number of interesting and pressing problems,

the most urgent of which is that which asks whether the mind is so related to the body that it can survive the annihilation of the latter as an effective organization, at death.

Theories of the relation of body and mind fall broadly into four categories according as they assert (a) mutual independence of body and mind; or (b) mutual dependence of body and mind; or (c) a one-sided dependence of mind on body; or (d) a one-sided dependence of body on mind. By the one-sided dependence of A on B is meant that the existence of B is a necessary condition of the existence of A, while the converse is not true. That is, B can exist without A, though A cannot exist without B. Evidently, in the problem before us, much will depend on the particular interpretation of the terms "body" and "mind." In theories of types (a), (b), and (c), mentioned above, the body is usually regarded as a peculiarly complex organization of atoms and molecules, the latter being conceived from the point of view of nineteenth century physics; while the mind is looked upon as the stream of sensations, images, thoughts and volitions, which make up the content of what is commonly called by the usefully vague name of "con-

sciousness." Of type (d) we shall say something later.

A typical theory asserting the mutual independence of body and mind is that known as "psycho-physical parallelism." The series of mental and of bodily events, respectively, are here supposed to go on quite independently. A mental event causes other mental events, and a bodily event causes other bodily events; but a mental event cannot cause a bodily event, nor a bodily event a mental event. Yet the exponents of the theory are compelled to admit that to any given mental event there "corresponds" a particular bodily event.

We need not dwell on this theory. For it is evident, in the first place, that it begs the whole question; and in the second place, it fails to recognize that such "correspondence" as it admits to exist between mental and bodily events, is the only *empirical* criterion that we can obtain, not only in this case, but in any case, of the subsistence of a causal relation. For the ground of the assertion of such a relation between any two events must always be that one is invariably observed to be accompanied by the other. Thus by recognizing invariable "correspondence" between mental and bodily events, the existence of causality between body

and mind is tacitly admitted, in addition to purely mental causality and purely bodily causality. The theory, in fact, when analyzed, is found to reduce to an assumption with regard to method of procedure, namely that the psychologist can in general pursue his inquiry into mental processes conveniently and validly while ignoring the bodily processes which accompany them; while the physiologist can equally for most purposes ignore the presence of mind. But this does not get us any further in the understanding of the relation of body and mind.

The second type of theory, namely that which asserts mutual dependence of body and mind, generally goes by the name of "interactionism." In philosophy of the modern era it first took definite shape in the metaphysics of Descartes. For Descartes, mind and matter were two substances entirely disparate in nature, the one distinguished by the characteristic quality of "thought," the other by the characteristic quality of "extension." These two substances were supposed to interact with one another in the case of the individual body and mind. Ultimately, however, in view of the utter disparity of the two substances, Descartes was led to postulate miraculous intervention on the part of God in bringing about their inter-

action; while in the hands of his followers, the theory became so changed as to be hardly recognizable.

Modern interactionists have mostly conceived mind and body after the fashion indicated at the beginning of this chapter. But if we look upon the body as a complex of material molecules, and upon the mind as a stream of sensations, thoughts, etc., difficulties begin to creep in similar to those which troubled Descartes. For we cannot interpret the interaction of mind and body either on the analogy of those physical actions which we perceive to go on in the external world, or on the analogy of those mental actions which occur in consciousness. There is no logical consideration which precludes interaction between entities so utterly disparate as mind and body thus conceived; but, in practice, we find it difficult, if not impossible, to form an idea of the nature of this interaction. But there is another way of conceiving mind and body, which renders the difficulties we are here encountering less formidable, and to this we shall return later.

The theory that the mind-body relation was characterized by a one-sided dependence of mind on body was very popular at the end of last century. That century was marked by

an unprecedented extension of the realm in which the laws of the material sciences of physics and biology held sway. One phenomenon after another which had hitherto eluded interpretation on the basis of those laws, now came to be subsumed under them; and finally, with the establishment in principle of the Darwinian theory of evolution, it seemed to the enthusiasts that mind itself might even be caught in the net, and regarded as a product, nay, a mere by-product, of matter. This theory was put into more or less definite shape by Huxley, and came to be known as "epiphenomenalism." According to Huxley and his followers mind was an "epiphenomenon"—an ineffective accompaniment of certain complex material processes, rather as phosphorescence is an accompaniment of certain other material processes, though it has no power to influence the course thereof. All effective action is therefore material, and when the action becomes sufficiently complicated, consciousness appears, a helpless follower of the processes occurring in the body, without power to control them in any way. At death the mind vanishes like a quenched flame.

It is unnecessary to consider in detail the fallacies of the above theory. In the first place, it starts from the wrong end. As we have seen,

everyone must really start in his reasoning from something, namely experience, which is at least in one essential part mental. The nineteenth century materialists were led in their reasoning to postulate material particles as the ultimate realities of which the world is made. They forgot the concrete reality—their own minds—from which they started, and failed to realize that atoms and molecules are but logical constructions built up from sense-data. Philosophy of science now recognizes the latter, which the materialists regarded as by-products of underlying material processes outside experience, to be the only reality apart from ourselves of which we are necessarily indubitably certain. However, crass materialism of the kind we have been considering is now generally discredited, though a few "die-hard" scientists still cling to it with strange fervour.

Lastly we have theories which assert the one-sided dependence of body on mind. Body, and, indeed, matter in general, is held to be the product or creation of a fundamental kind of entity, mental or spiritual in nature. This entity is conceived sometimes as Reason or Intelligence, sometimes as Will, or perhaps as a combination of Reason and Will. In extremer forms of the theory, matter is considered to

be the creation of spirit, both in its form and in its substance. Or, again, the substance of matter may be held to exist independently of spirit, but not its form. This indeterminate, chaotic substance is the material on which spirit acts, working it up into the various forms with which we are familiar in the realm of Nature. In any case, it is doubtful whether such theories can be maintained as they stand. But if certain interpretations of mind and matter be adopted, it is not improbable that it may be true to say that matter depends on mind in a sense in which mind does not depend on matter.

We may now proceed to develop the theory of the relation of body and mind which arises out of the general philosophical hypothesis as to the nature of reality outlined in the second chapter. It will be remembered that, according to that hypothesis, reality consists of a plurality of individual spirits or "monads," linked into a universe by the immanence in them of a single entity. These spirits interact, their interaction constituting for each of them what we call "experience," so that the sense-data presented in the experience are the appearance, to the subject or spirit concerned, of other spirits. Let us consider the case of a particular human organism, consisting of mind and body. By

the mind of the organism we shall mean the particular human spirit who perceives and acts through the body of the organism, to whom, in fact, the body "belongs," as it were. Now the body is for the spirit within it a physical object among other physical objects. But the relation of spirit to body, while similar in some respects to its relation to other physical objects, is in other very important respects quite different. It is similar in so far as the spirit perceives parts of its body just as it perceives other objects, and the spirit is thus an entity distinct from the body it inhabits. But the peculiar muscular and organic sensations to which the body gives rise are quite unique, and different from anything contained in the perception of other objects.

Now we have seen that all physical objects are really built up of sense-data, while sense-data are the appearance of spiritual beings. Hence the body is a certain group of spirits or monads, and the sense-data perceived when we look at the body are the appearance of the monads. Following Leibniz, we may call the spirit to whom the body belongs, the "dominant monad" of the organism, while the spirits composing the body will be "subordinate monads." Evidently the relation of the domin-

ant to the subordinate monads will be different from its relation to the monads composing other bodies. It is this special relation which, in the world-view we are advocating, constitutes the relation of mind and body. It is manifested typically in perception, where the initiative seems to come from the side of the body, and in volition, where it seems to come from the side of the mind.

The brain and central nervous system consist of a network of neural communications joining a number of "centres," higher and lower, the lower being more or less under the control of the higher. Even so we may perhaps envisage the subordinate monads of the body as a hierarchy containing monads of relatively higher mentality in more or less complete control over monads of relatively lower mentality, all under the supreme control of the dominant monad, who is presumably at a considerably higher level of mental development than any of the subordinates.

Perhaps the organism can be best explained on the analogy of an army. The supreme commander is the dominant monad. The subordinate commanders and their officers represent the hierarchy of subordinate monads cor-

responding to the higher and lower neural and cerebral centres. The commands issued by the dominant monad are transmitted through the higher to the lower subordinates until they issue in bodily activity, which is the immediate manifestation of the activity of what are perhaps the lowliest monads of the organism. This is the principle of volition. On the other hand, the reaction of these inferior monads to activities external to the organism are transmitted through the higher subordinates to the dominant monad. This is the principle of perception. Certain forms of activity, however, are, in the case of an army, left entirely to the control of the subordinate officers, especially those forms which are of more or less routine character. Similarly in the case of an organism processes such as digestion and circulation, together with certain reflex actions, go on without any direct interference from the dominant monad, who is usually quite unconscious of them.

But our analogy can be pressed further. The activity of an army consists partly of original lines of action, partly of routine procedure, the latter being inculcated and maintained by drill. The assimilation of new recruits into the corporate body is accomplished by drill. Yet this presupposes a certain minimum level

of mental development in the recruit. Apart from this he is unable to comprehend what is expected of him, and to conform to the necessary drill in such a way as to become an efficient unit. In this case it is necessary to reject him. If, by any chance, too many of this class of recruit are absorbed and not rejected, the efficiency of an army may be seriously impaired even to the point of chaos or complete dissolution. The same thing will happen if certain recruits gain a firm footing, who, though well developed mentally, are of a type the activity of which sets strongly in opposition to the purposes for which an army exists.

Now a process closely similar to the above occurs in the organism in the maintenance of tissue structure by the assimilation of food. We may perhaps look upon this as the introduction of new monads into the organism who are drilled into the part they are to play by the monads already present there. But some kinds of matter are not suitable for food. These are possibly constituted by monads whose level of development is not sufficient to enable them to respond satisfactorily to the attempts made to assimilate them. In this connection, it is noteworthy that organic substances form the type of matter which is suitable for food, whereas

inorganic substances are generally quite unsuitable. Now organic matter forms a link between the true organism and inorganic matter, and the latter might be described as the least animate of all matter. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that organic substances are constituted by monads at a higher level of development than those constituting inorganic substances. Of course it is true that certain organic substances are poisonous, but it is not impossible that these correspond to the class of recruits whose mental development is of such a kind as to render their activity inimical to the purposes of the corporate body of which they have become members. As in the case of an army, the absorption of too much unsuitable matter into the body will lead to its decay and final dissolution.

But there is one direction in which our analogy breaks down. We have spoken of the *transmission* of effects from dominant to subordinate monads and *vice versa*, which seems to imply a point of view which regards the body as a line of communication with the dominant monad at one end and the external world at the other. For the purpose of physiological description, which deals with material appearance, this point of view is doubtless a useful one to adopt.

But so soon as we put ourselves at the more fundamental standpoint of the mind of the organism itself, we see that there is nothing in the experience of perception and volition similar to this telegraphic kind of process. In perception and volition the mind or dominant monad is evidently in some sense in direct contact with the external world which is the appearance of other monads. It acts not simply through the intervention of the subordinates, but *with and in them*, as it were. In our sense of bodily activity we seem in general to be equally present in all parts of the body of the activity of which we are conscious, though this presence is not a spatial one. The point is, of course, that spatial analogies break down when applied to spiritual agents, for, as we saw in the last chapter, the latter are not characterized by spatial qualities. The existence of the body is probably a necessary condition of the interaction, or of the growth of the interaction, between mind and the external world, but not an intervening factor which makes that interaction essentially indirect. The peculiarly intimate nature of this relation between mind and body defies precise definition by its very immediacy, and is probably best indicated by the term "immanence," without attempt at

definition. The immanence of the dominant monad is the principle in virtue of which the subordinate monads are enabled to constitute an organized system, every part of which is in intimate connection with every other part.

The relation of the mind to the body is, however, a dual one, as we have previously had occasion to remark. For not only does the mind act in and with the body—the two also interact in a way similar to that in which the organism interacts with agents foreign to it. We perceive *with* our bodies, but we also perceive our bodies themselves, just as we perceive other bodies in the external world. Thus the mind, though immanent in the body, also transcends it, being distinct from it as an existential entity, and not identical with it—a most important point.

The relation of immanence, and the control which is the consequence thereof, seems to admit of degrees of completeness. At birth, and for a while afterwards, the business of life is carried on principally by the body, mainly by means of reflex acts into which the consciousness of the dominant monad enters, if at all, in but a vague and indefinite way. The mind which has just entered into this world has to learn practically everything by experience. But

there are many things which the body does not have to learn. It does not have to learn how to grow, or how to react to certain kinds of stimuli. It is the receptacle of racial experience accumulated in the past, which is perhaps handed on from generation to generation by the transmission of subordinate monads, who already know their task, from parent to child.*

Hence in early life the body plays the part of bringing the mind into more and more intimate and effective relation with the world around it. As this process continues, the relation of mind and body becomes increasingly close, and the mind gains a correspondingly more complete control over the body. This goes on until maturity, at which mind and body may be said to have reached the most complete and harmonious stage of their interrelation. But the mind is capable of developing still further, while the body is not. Hence-forward the latter is a hindrance to the development of the former and the bond between the two begins to loosen. This loosening is manifested so far as the body is concerned by senile decay, while on the part of the mind it shows itself by gradual loss of control, and a certain fixity or even retrograde movement in mental develop-

* Cf. Dr. James Ward's *Heredity and Memory*.

ment. With the final dissolution of the mind at bodily death, however, these obstacles to the higher flight of the mind are removed.

At this point we may note the important *rôle* played by the body in the development of personality and self-consciousness. Young children, like our primitive ancestors, though conscious of the world around them, are not conscious of themselves as distinct individual entities. Probably they would never attain to self-consciousness were it not for the fact that in the flux and diversity of the sense-impressions which pour in upon them, there is one comparatively permanent element, namely that group of presentations which constitutes the percept of their own bodies. The body provides a *point d'appui*, as it were, a more or less fixed centre of reference to which the rest of the world may be brought into relation. Hence it is that, in the development of self-consciousness, the self is in the first instance identified with the body. Later it becomes identified more particularly with certain parts of the body, but it is not until the development thus engendered has proceeded very much further that the concept of self swings free of the body concept, and we come to realize ourselves as concrete entities distinct from, though

intimately related to, our bodies. But, were it not that the body provides the starting point, we might never come to this realization, and it is perhaps partly for this reason that bodily life is necessary to full spiritual development.

It is important to understand exactly what is meant by "personality." An individual's personality is not identical with that individual, but rather with *his own idea (or system of ideas) of himself*. For it is this system of ideas which determines his actions. The system may (and, indeed, will) include not only his conception of himself, properly so-called, but also those of his body, his relatives, and often his possessions. To this constellation of ideas William James gave the name of "empirical ego," by which name we may distinguish it from the concrete ego, i.e. the individual subject himself.

Now it is clear that the system of ideas which constitutes the personality will include sub-systems (only one of which will generally be clearly in consciousness at a given time, the others being sub-conscious), for even the normal man plays many parts in his daily life. Yet the sub-systems will have points of common contact, and it is on the maintenance of these that mental stability and coherence depends. If points of contact are obliterated, one or more sub-systems

will become "split-off," giving rise to the condition known as "dissociated personality," of which we shall have more to say in chapter VI.

A word of warning is necessary here. It must not be supposed that the ideas of which we have been speaking are entities foreign to the individual himself, which act upon him and attract him into one course of action or another. On the contrary they are rather expressions of his own activity or tendency to activity. The impulse comes from within, not from without; and the development of personality is carried through by subjective action. But it does follow from what we have said that the *same* subject may have more than one personality, and this is a very important point in connection with the theory of dissociated personality and multiple personality, as we shall see later.

Finally, a word must be said on perception, which in its later stages gives rise to memory and imagination, and the dependence of these functions on the body. What we experience as perception is, as we have already seen, our interaction with other monads or subjects of experience. The content of perception in any given instance is the form taken by subjective activity, and is a joint product of the latter and of the activity of the other subjects con-

cerned. We regard the content of percepton as the manifestation to the given subject of these other subjects.

Now just which monads will act on us, in a given instance, is in part determined by ourselves in the direction of our own activity, which we experience as "attention." Moreover it is a fundamental characteristic of mental activity, when re-directed in a given way, to take the same form, and to follow the same sequence, as before. That is, we interact with certain monads and this gives rise to a certain content of perception; when our activity is redirected the same way again, even though those monads are no longer in relation to us as they were before, our activity will take a similar form, experienced as an *image* of the previous percept, and will follow the same path, giving rise to the experience which we term "association." Images are therefore in some ways similar to the corresponding percepts, for the reasons we have given, and in some ways dissimilar (e.g. being generally less "vivid"), owing to the absence of certain of the conditions (viz. our relations with the other monads) to which the percept owed its original inception. When our activity is directed in other ways, the tendency to take the particular form in

question is latent, the image which is the expression of it being, as we say, "subconscious."

Now the question arises as to whether perception, memory, and imagination are dependent on the body in such a way that they necessarily cease at bodily death. The answer is that there is no logical necessity which compels us to accept this dependence. Perception, memory, and imagination are functions of the spirit which owns the body—the dominant monad—though we must of course suppose that the subordinate monads have perception and memory of their own; but, so far as the dominant monad is concerned, while doubtless the particular forms of his activity, whether perceptual or volitional, are in part modified by his immanence in the body, there is no reason for supposing that these activities cannot go on apart from immanence in a body. The circumstances of the case have been strikingly illustrated by Dr McTaggart* on the analogy of a man confined within a house and therefore unable to view the external world except through the windows. As Dr McTaggart points out, there is nothing in this to compel us to believe that, if the man walked out of the house, he would not be able to see any longer, though perhaps

* In *Immortality and Pre-existence*, p. 59.

his vision might be modified, especially if the windows had been blue or red.

We may conclude, then, that, although mental activity is perhaps always accompanied during the incarnate life by bodily activity, and although the latter is one important condition of the full development of the former, yet mental activity may quite well continue after bodily death. Whether our existence in the next world is truly discarnate, or whether we still possess some kind of body, though a different one, is a problem which we have not yet sufficient knowledge at our disposal to settle.*

* The relation of mind and body is treated fully in *Spiritual Pluralism*, chap. VII.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSCIOUS, THE SUBCONSCIOUS, AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

The exploration of the mind—Three "levels" of mental content—The field of consciousness—Focus of attention—Threshold—The Subliminal—Interpretation of these terms—Empirical ego and subconscious self—The unconscious—Instincts—Repressed wishes and ideas—Conflict and its results—Feeling-tone—The pleasure-pain principle—The reality principle—Contradictory terminology of the psycho-analysts—Definition of an unconscious wish or idea—The power and limitations of the unconscious—The unity of mental process—Metaphysical interpretation of the unconscious—Spiritual energy and the libido, etc.—Spirits are centres of energy—Application of the energy concept in physics—The unconscious as formless spiritual energy—Instinct—The directing of spiritual energy—Sublimation—Repression—The Censor—Dreams.

IT is our purpose, in this chapter, to leave the bodily aspect of the organism, and to devote ourselves to the exploration of the mind. At the outset, we find that mental content appears to fall into three sections or levels which may be called the conscious, the subconscious, and the unconscious. Early psychology was concerned wholly with the consideration of the first of these. The existence of the other two was almost unsuspected. During the last century, however, psychologists and philosophers

began to realize the potency of that realm of half-forgotten memories which hover in a shadowy fashion about the fringe of our ordinary consciousness. The importance of this shadowland had come to be more and more clearly recognized as time went on, and to it was given the name "subconsciousness." But it was only in comparatively recent years that the existence and power of still another mental zone came to be suspected, a zone the elements of which lie for the most part buried deep beyond recall. Since the discovery of this zone, which is now generally known as "the unconscious," very rapid progress has been made in the investigation of its character and mode of action.

The "field of consciousness," properly so-called, includes at any given time all those presentations (whether thoughts, images, sensations or movements) which stand more or less clearly before the attention of the subject. These presentations differ greatly, of course, in the clearness with which they are perceived. Only a very small portion of the field of consciousness is presented with complete clearness at a particular time. This small portion is termed the "focus of attention." It may be a part of the visual field, the auditory field, or the fields of taste, smell, or touch; but it

is easiest to think in terms of the visual field, any general statement about which can without difficulty be extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other fields.

Spreading out from the margin of consciousness there are, still within the field of consciousness, areas or zones of diminishing clearness, to any point of which the focus of attention can generally be easily transferred. Eventually, however, a zone is reached beyond which presentations have passed out of the realm of perception altogether. This zone is variously termed the " margin " or " fringe," " limen " or " threshold," of consciousness.

As we have previously seen, the whole presentation forming the field of consciousness is the determinate expression of the subject's activity, the changing focus of attention and the changing field being the way in which the subject experiences the changing direction of his activity.

Below the threshold of consciousness lies the region of the subconscious or " subliminal." It is the region of thoughts, images, and memories which are not for the moment claiming attention. It is distinguished from the field of consciousness by the fact that, whereas attention can ordinarily be transferred without difficulty to any point

of the latter, it requires a special effort of attention (an "act of recollection," as we call it) to bring a subliminal image or memory to the focus of attention; and, in the act, the subliminal image passes over the threshold, and rises into the field of consciousness. One system of subliminal images will form a part of that larger system of ideas which we considered in the last chapter under the name of the "empirical ego." When we speak of an action as being due to the "subconscious self," we really mean that it is due to the rising of this subliminal system (or, more generally, *any* subliminal system) into consciousness.

Just as we regard presentations within the field of consciousness as the expression of subjective activity, so we may regard the elements of the field of subconsciousness as *tendencies* on the part of the subject to certain forms of activity, the passing of these tendencies into real action being experienced as the rise of subliminal images above the threshold. The impulse of this activity springs, as always, from the subject himself. It is directed "outwards" from him, and not "inwards" upon him, and is experienced as the direction and effort of attention.

Beyond the field of subconsciousness there

exists a mental content the extent and potentiality of which is only now being fully realized. This is generally known as "the unconscious," a designation which, for reasons shortly to be considered, is not altogether satisfactory. The field of the unconscious is distinguished from the field of subconsciousness by the fact that whereas the elements of the latter can ordinarily be brought into full consciousness by an act of recollection, the elements of the unconscious cannot be thus re-called—special methods, usually requiring the co-operation of another individual in addition to the subject concerned, being necessary to bring them into the field of consciousness.

The contents of the unconscious seem to fall into two portions. In the first place they include those impulses and instincts a share in which is the common heritage of all men, and, indeed, to a greater or less extent, of all living beings. Many of these impulses, even at a comparatively late stage in the history of an individual, may never have been realized clearly in consciousness save through their effects.

In the second place, the unconscious is the receptacle of systems of ideas which have passed from consciousness, not merely into the subconscious region, but, owing to various factors

of which "repression" (as it is now generally called) is the most important, into a still deeper oblivion. These systems of ideas in the unconscious are termed "complexes." In some cases they may be comparatively normal and healthy, in others they may be so abnormal as to be definitely pathological. Among recent writers there is a tendency to restrict the term "complex" to systems of the latter type, but it will be more convenient for our purpose to retain the term in its wider meaning.

The unconscious (and more especially certain elements of it) constitutes a further extension of what we have previously referred to as the "subconscious" or "subliminal" self. Its influence on the daily routine of our lives—in both their physiological and their mental aspects—is profound. For example, it often happens that two complexes are constituted by mutually incompatible systems of ideas. The result is what is known as a "conflict." As this occurs in the unconscious, the agency of conscious reflective reason, by which alone a solution can be effected, is lacking. The results are frequently powerful and far-reaching, the "blind" efforts at adjustment giving rise to all manner of unusual functional effects, both mental and physiological. In such cases there

is generally but one way out. The conflicting elements must be brought clearly into the field of consciousness, where they can be examined in the light of reason, and their contradictions resolved as far as possible.

But the power of the unconscious is manifested not only on a large scale in functional diseases of the mind and nervous system, but also on a small scale in the trivial occurrences of every-day life. Absent-mindedness, slips of the tongue or of the pen, in fact small errors of omission and commission in general, are frequently found, when traced to their ultimate sources, to be due to the action of unconscious thoughts and wishes.

This brings us to three points which we must briefly consider before passing on to the interpretation of the unconscious in terms of our general philosophical theory. In the first place, the mention of "wishes" brings before us an aspect of mental life on which we have so far laid but little stress. In the preceding we have devoted our attention mainly to activity, the "conative" aspect of subjective existence, consciously experienced as attention. But there is another important factor in mental life, which largely determines the direction of attention, and hence also determines which elements shall be retained in consciousness and which shall be

allowed to drop into the subconscious or, beyond it, into the unconscious. This factor is the peculiar character, attaching to each of our sensations, thoughts, and images, known as "feeling-tone." When we say that a presentation possesses feeling-tone, we simply mean that it arouses in the subject to whom it is presented certain feelings which may be broadly divided into two groups according as they are pleasurable or painful (absolutely "neutral" sensations are the exception rather than the rule). In general we attend to the things which give us pleasure, and avoid those which give us pain; and it is this "pleasure-pain principle" which primarily determines the retention of ideas in consciousness (or just below the threshold of consciousness, and therefore easily to be recalled) or their repression into the unconscious. When we recall our painful experiences into consciousness, face real life squarely, and endeavour to find a rational way out of our difficulties, we are acting on the "reality principle" as opposed to the pleasure-pain principle; we are refusing to shirk the painful side of life and courageously endeavouring to meet "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and by opposing, end them," to the betterment of ourselves and of our relations with those around us.

In the second place, it may be noted that we have referred to "unconscious" thoughts and wishes, a form of terminology generally employed by psycho-analysts. But, it may be urged, does it not imply a contradiction to speak of *unconscious* thoughts and wishes, and generally of *unconscious* mind, for is it not the very essence of a thought, or a wish, or indeed of any other mental process properly so-called, to be *conscious?* This objection is a sound one, and it is certainly time that the significance of psycho-analytic terminology was made clearer. It must be significant in some sense, for psycho-analytic theory works in practice. Perhaps the contradiction may be resolved by defining an unconscious wish as a process of the workings of which we are not conscious, which leads eventually to action (of which we may or may not be clearly conscious) *of the same kind as that which would have resulted from a certain conscious wish.* Undoubtedly the phrase "an unconscious wish" is inherently self-contradictory, but it may conveniently be used if interpreted in some such way as we have indicated. The unconscious process is not, strictly speaking, a wish or an idea at all, but its workings have originated in a wish or an idea and will result, if at all, in consequences

such as would be expected to follow from this wish or idea. The two ends of the chain of causation are in consciousness, but some of the intermediate links are not. For the same reason it is fair to speak of the content of the unconscious as "mental," provided we remember what we are really implying here by the use of that term.

Are we, then, helpless in the grip of the unconscious, and not free-willed beings at all? By no means, for generally, as we have seen, the origin and the result of the workings of the unconscious are in consciousness, and may therefore be made the objects of reflective reason and conscious deliberation. Generally, but not always, for example in the case of the instincts; but, even here, all that can be meant by being "in the grip of the unconscious" is that we are thrall to our own natures, and self-determination is not the negation of freedom.

Our third point concerns our manner of referring to mental content as constituted by three stages or levels, the conscious, the subconscious, and the unconscious. Now it is convenient for the purposes of exposition to speak of the mind in this way, but it must not be supposed that the mind is really tripartite. If pressed, the analogy is misleading. As we

have seen so often in other connections, the mind is essentially a unity*, and it works as a unity. Consciousness is simply the realization of that activity which is the result of impulse or tendency which, so far as it is unrealized in actuality, is unconscious. The subject is a unitary entity tending to act, and anon acting, in a certain way. In reflective thought we analyze this entity and examine the tendencies apart from the actions in which they are realized; but concretely the subject is not a composite of tendency and real action, each completely distinguishable and self-existent apart from the other. Such a conception of the subject would evidently be meaningless. The unconscious and the subconscious, which are drawn out through consciousness to a fine point in the focus of attention, are simply terms for the directive tendencies, approaching more or less closely to realization, which go to determine the form of subjective activity, the latter being experienced, in its concrete realization, as the content of the focussed attention.

We may now pass on to consider the significance of the preceding in the light of our hypothesis as to the nature of reality. It will

* Cf. also, on this point, Whately Smith, "The Unity of Mental Processes," *Psyche*, Jan., 1922.

be remembered that this hypothesis asserts that reality consists of a system of individual spirits or subjects of experience (a system of which we human beings are members) constituting a universe in virtue of the immanence therein of a single concrete entity, the precise nature of which it is not our purpose to discuss in this book. We are here primarily concerned with the individual spirits, and we have emphasised activity or effective agency as the fundamental attribute of these. Now practically all explorers of the mind, from the earliest times, agree that mental processes (conscious and unconscious) involve as a factor an essential impulse to action to which various names have been given. The classical concept of ἐνεργεια formulated by Aristotle, and the corresponding concepts of the most recent psychology—Freud's *libido* (in its more extended meaning), Jung's *horme*, Bergson's *élan vital*, even, perhaps, Driesch's psychoid or entelechy—all refer ultimately to the same thing. They are attempts to express the fact of the eternal impulse to action in each individual spirit which is the main postulate of the theory we are maintaining. Spirits are, in fact, centres of energy or activity each of which, in its outward drive, meets and interacts with the others, moulding and re-moulding the universe. Nor can it be

objected that this notion of spiritual "energy" is an illegitimate extension of a concept which holds only in the realm of physical science. Rather is the converse true, for Bertrand Russell and others have shown that descriptive physics has no need of such concepts. But this does not discredit the idea of energy or activity. If this idea has no concrete basis, how did it ever come to be used in physics at all, whether necessary or not? The truth is, of course, that activity is an indefinable character the nature of which we realize clearly in our own existence, though we cannot define it since it is subjectively *experienced* and not objectively *perceived or discovered*. When, however, there occur, in the subject-matter of physics, sequences in the external world similar to those we have actually initiated by our own agency, we naturally tend to carry over the concept of that agency into the physical world. Moreover, if our philosophical hypothesis is sound, we are from one point of view right in so doing; for although it may not be found necessary to introduce the idea of energy in a description of the material world, that idea does refer to an essential character of those spiritual beings of which the material world is a manifestation.

But, to return to the interpretation of con-

scious and unconscious, we must note that spiritual energy or libido is not conscious as such. It approaches conscious realization only so far as it takes a *determinate form*, becoming consciously experienced when it eventually issues in definitely directed action. The uttermost depths of the unconscious may therefore be regarded as formless spiritual energy—the bare libido. In living individuals, however, this energy is already canalized to a certain extent; it is not mere chaos, but consists of certain broad determinate tendencies, namely the instincts. Spiritual life consists in the more and more definite, and therefore more and more complex, determination of these tendencies, which in this way pass from the unconscious to the subconscious, and hence, when realized in determinate action, to the conscious. Action may then pass back into potentiality or tendency, from the conscious to the subconscious and the unconscious.

Each of us thus has at his disposal a certain fund of energy, so to speak. Subjective existence consists in the directing of this energy. The latter is in itself neither good nor bad, neither moral nor immoral; such categories only come in when we begin to consider the different ways in which activity may be directed.

These ways may be good or bad, if there be a true standard of morality at all. The impulse to dissipate energy on evil things may be remoulded into a form which connotes an impulse to direct energy to better things. This is the process which is called "sublimation." In particular the vast amount of energy canalized in the instincts, which are the relics of the fundamental needs of the early life of the race, may, at our present level of development, be more profitably directed to other and, as we now think, higher things.

Another concept which requires a brief examination in the light of our discussion is that of repression. The significance of this term is far too positive. We do not actively push ideas into the unconscious, as it seems to imply. Such attempts would be experienced as attention to the very ideas we were seeking to exclude, and would therefore defeat their own end. On the contrary, lapse of ideas into the subconscious or the unconscious is effected by directing attention *away* from them and towards other presentations. They become potential tendencies which may, of course, retain a share of the impulse to activity sufficient to cause trouble. In such cases the tendency will always be striving to realize itself in action, though the particular

form of that action may be much modified in accordance with the pleasure-pain principle. Incidentally, it may be remarked here that this tendency of activity to take pleasurable and avoid painful forms is all that is really meant by "the censor," a concept which has been hypostatized by some as a genuine agent; whereas the only agent that enters into the matter is the particular subject concerned. During sleep, when ordinary presentations are withdrawn from the field of consciousness, repressed ideas or wishes get their opportunity of being realized in action, and take on a definite form (albeit modified by "the censor") thus rising into consciousness as dreams. But here we approach the border line which separates the individual spirit from other spirits and the spiritual community as a whole, and must prepare to pass from the realm of psychology to that of psychical research.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEMS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Psychology and psychical research—Our purpose is not to criticise but to search for explanation—Sleep and hypnotism—Suggestibility and suspended attention—Post-hypnotic suggestion—Hallucination—Cure by suggestion—Immunity from physical hurt—Christian science—Stigmata—Changes of personality—Dissociation—True multiple personalty—The Beauchamp case—Possession—Manner in which it is effected—Abnormal perception (clairvoyance and clairaudience)—Ultraliminal sense-impressions—Phantasms of the living—Conditions for their production—Phantasms of the dead—Their significance as evidence of survival of bodily death—Telepathy—Distinguished from ordinary perception—Community and reciprocity of spiritual activity—Motor automatisms (automatic speech and writing)—Influence of the subconscious—The medium entranced—The medium not entranced—Valuable evidence of survival—Physical phenomena—Levitation, tappings, and materialisation—Experiments of Crawford and Schrenck-Notzing—The ectoplasm—The governing principle of physical phenomena—Poltergeist—Importance of psychical phenomena and necessity for experiment.

PSYCHOLOGY is concerned with the mental processes, and their manifestation in outward behaviour, of the individual. What is generally known as "psychical research" is, on the other hand, mainly concerned not merely with these processes themselves, but with their effects on the environment of the individual, and especially with their influence on the mental processes of other individuals.

It is not our intention here to examine critically the evidence for the actual occurrence of the phenomena which are the objects of investigation in psychical research. No one would deny that fraud and trickery abound here, as in most other departments of life, for psychic phenomena are peculiarly susceptible to fraudulent imitation. On the other hand, most unprejudiced people, who trouble to think about the matter at all and have a reasonably scientific (and not dogmatic) habit of mind, are now willing to admit that the evidence is sufficiently abundant, and of a sufficiently satisfactory nature, to provide reasonable presumption of the genuineness of this type of phenomena. It is true that a few pseudo-scientific men, whose beliefs are firmly anchored to the dogmatic and illogical materialism of last century, are wont to declare irascibly that psychic phenomena are a *priori* impossible (whatever they mean exactly by that), but these are past praying for, and have now ceased to count.

Our purpose, then, is not to criticize evidence, but to accept the substratum of fact and to search for an explanation. We shall therefore examine the chief types of phenomena in order to see how they fit in with our metaphysical theories.

We may begin by a consideration of the obscurer mental states of the individual. The process which naturally springs first to the mind here is that of hypnotism. The hypnotic state is characterized by a relapse from normal activity on the part of the subject concerned, and a transition to a condition of marked suggestibility which is manifested by a tendency on the part of the subject readily to follow out any line of action to which his attention is directed by the operator.

The significance of the hypnotic trance is more clearly brought out by a consideration of the nature of ordinary sleep, a state which the hypnotic trance closely resembles in many ways. What really happens when we fall asleep? A moment's thought will show that the primary condition necessary for sleep is the withdrawal of attention from all those presentations to which it is normally directed. This withdrawal we achieve in part by physiological methods such as the closing of the eyes, but the process must be completed by withdrawing the attention also from the images and thoughts with which it is ordinarily concerned. When the process has reached a certain stage sleep may be said to have supervened. There has been a cessation of normal mental activity,

the attention being in a suspended condition. It is then that certain tendencies, manifested by subconscious ideas or wishes, which, excluded from the field of consciousness by the more vivid presentations which then occupy it, have remained latent during the day, get their chance of passing into actuality, and the images which express them rise above the threshold into the field of consciousness. This is the origin of dreams.

In a closely similar way hypnosis is induced by withdrawing the subject's attention from ordinary presentations (frequently by fixation of his attention on some particular small object). He then falls into a state more or less resembling sleep, in which his normal activity is suspended, including those rational systems of ideas which ordinarily control action and prevent him from behaving in a stupid or ridiculous manner. A comparatively slight impulse or suggestion will then suffice to start his activity off in a special direction, where it works itself out in accordance with his previous actions in that direction, experienced as association of ideas. Moreover, strong suggestion will set up tendencies which, though latent when the subject returns to his normal condition, may yet exert a powerful influence on his actions. This post-hypnotic

suggestion often consists in setting up a tendency in the subject to perform a certain action at a certain time after the trance. During the latter the idea of this particular time is so strongly impressed on the subject in his then extremely suggestible state, that, when the time arrives, the tendency will pass irresistibly into action, although the subject may have had no previous recollection of what occurred during the trance. Often the resultant absorption in this one idea may so far exclude other ideas from the field of consciousness as to constitute a state of light hypnosis. The latter is very similar to the transition stage between waking and sleeping and passes readily enough into the second, or deeper, stage, or perhaps even into the third stage, which is practically identical with sleep itself.

Post-hypnotic suggestion may also consist in the production of a hallucinatory image at a certain time after the trance. This proceeding is precisely analogous to the performance of a suggested action, for imagining is a form of activity, though it may remain mental without issuing in overt physical action. It is probable that all genuine hallucinations (as distinct from genuine phantasms, which we shall consider later) are the consequence of especially strong

tendencies set up subconsciously by some means or other, which, under appropriate conditions, pass irresistibly into actuality, being experienced as the perception of an image which, if the tendency be strong enough to exclude other presentations from the field of consciousness, will appear exceptionally vivid owing to the absence from observation of ordinary sense-impressions.

So-called "cure by suggestion" seems to be attributable to the power, which can be exercised as described above, of setting up an especially strong tendency, which, in the case of cures, will take a form in direct opposition to the activity which is producing the disease. When we suffer pain, the intensity of the experience which is the expression of the discordant activity is so great as to tend always to bring it to the focus of attention, and it is well known that this insistence on our attention of the painful feeling, itself serves to aggravate the cause to which the pain is due. Now if the attention can be withdrawn from the pain (which then ceases temporarily to exist for the subject as an actuality) the primary condition of cure is satisfied. Evidently a strong counter-tendency will help here by passing itself into actuality, which process will be experienced as a change

in the focus of attention. This is the principle of cure by suggestion, and it is not improbable that the alleged immunity from scars and burns which sometimes occurs during hypnosis and similar states is a consequence of the same principle. Ignore the pain if you can, and you render its cause harmless. This is the kernel of truth to be found in what is commonly known as "Christian Science." Conversely, concentration of attention on the idea of pain and suffering may produce the corresponding bodily marks or other effects; hence, perhaps, the origin of the stigmata reported to have appeared in the past on the bodies of saints absorbed in the agony of their imaginary sufferings.

We may now pass to a brief consideration of changes of personality. Such changes fall into two groups, namely dissociated personality and true multiple personality. In the former only one *subject* is concerned; in the latter more than one subject is implied. We have already touched (in the last chapter) on the question of dissociated personality, when it was pointed out that the personality of each one of us is to a certain extent dissociated, for we all play many parts in life. But in the normal individual there exist points of contact between the various personality-systems in virtue of which they

become sub-systems forming together the complete system of ideas which is the whole personality. In certain cases the points of contact may become blurred or obliterated, as, for example, when the psychic energy is infused mainly into one sub-system, draining the others and leaving them but pale ghosts of themselves. This sub-system may then exert such a dominant control over behaviour as to cause it to vary so much from the usual that the individual literally becomes a different person. In such cases, if things do not eventually right themselves, the only solution is to recreate, by careful analysis and suggestion, the sense of reason and proportion in the subject concerned, and hence to effect a re-fusion of the sub-personality and the main personality. In cases where the dissociation is of such a kind as to obliterate the social elements of personality which determine the action of the individual in accordance with the conventions on which the safety and the unity of society depend, moral or criminal insanity supervenes. It is in any case impossible to dogmatise as to the variety of personalities which one individual may assume, for the content of the sub-conscious and the unconscious is so vast that we are unable to set definite limits to it. This is one reason why an analytic ex-

ploration of the mentality of psychic mediums is so necessary, for its bearing on the evidence for the existence of real discarnate spirits is clearly of supreme importance.

In taking up the problem of true multiple personality we begin to pass from that side of the science of psychical research which deals with the mental processes of particular subjects to the side which is concerned with the psychic relations between different subjects. Multiple personality, if it exists at all, is much rarer than dissociated personality, for it consists in the existence, not merely of one individual with different personalities, but of two or more individuals immanent in the same body at different times. The classical case is that of Miss Beauchamp, who exhibited four different personalities, three of which seem to have been ordinary dissociations, while the fourth ("Sally" by name) is believed by some (e.g. McDougall) to have been another individual, for she exhibited a degree of independence sufficient actually to enable her to *help* in the fusion of the other three personalities.*

As to the manner in which this "possession," if it exists, is effected, we are necessarily at

* For an account of this case cf. e.g. Sir W. Barrett, *The Threshold of the Unseen* (3rd edition), pp. 136 ff.

present largely in ignorance. Possibly it is experienced as a reversal of the process which constitutes normal bodily death. The latter seems to consist in the first place of a peculiarly complete withdrawal of attention from all normal presentations, including those which make up the "body-feeling," and is in this respect analogous to profound slumber. But whether it differs from slumber only in the degree of this withdrawal, or also in involving a further factor which finally snaps the mind-body link, it is not yet possible to say. Yet it is noteworthy that the members of certain savage tribes are apparently able, under certain conditions, though in sound bodily health, to lie down and die as simply as the ordinary man lies down and sleeps. But however this may be, the intruding spirit, once it has established that contact with the body which is the reversal of the process which finally dissolves the body-mind bond at death, may perhaps experience the onset of possession as though it were an awakening from profound slumber. All this, however, is largely speculative, and need not be pursued any further here.

In turning our attention to our next topic, abnormal perception, we shall find ourselves on somewhat different ground. Abnormal perception, which usually takes the form of clair-

voyance and clairaudience, is the perception of distant or hidden objects which, in normal circumstances, could not be perceived at all. We may seek the explanation of this in the fact that the plurality of spirits is not a mere plurality but constitutes a universe. Hence each will be influenced continuously, to a greater or less extent, by every one of the others. The most familiar example of this is elucidated in physical science, in the study of which we become aware of the fact that every body in the universe must always exert some influence over every other body, to however small an extent. In spiritual existence, this mutual influence is experienced as the flux of sense-impressions which are continuously presented in all manner of ways. But by far the larger number of these impressions will be too faint to enter the field of consciousness and engage the attention. They remain beyond the threshold, and are said to be "ultraliminal." Now abnormal perception seems always to be accompanied by some degree of trance; that is, the normal activity (or the attention to normal presentations) of the percipient is to a certain extent suspended, and hence the ultraliminal impressions may be enabled to enter the field of consciousness, and, in the absence of other far more vivid impressions

which usually swamp them, to become the focus of attention. If such be the case, the perception of distant or hidden objects becomes quite comprehensible.

The consideration of abnormal perception leads naturally to a discussion of phantasms of the living and of the dead. From what we have said it will be clear that phantasms of the living are likely to be, in general, examples of abnormal perception. But in this particular case of the latter, two conditions generally hold. In the first place the individual whose phantasm is perceived is usually at that time in a state of intense volition or of intense emotion; and, secondly, there usually exists some intimate bond, such as kinship, between this individual and the percipient. This is not difficult to understand, for it is to changes in the circumstances and feelings of our dear ones that we are most sensitive when they are literally present with us, and it is likely that the same condition will hold when they are "absent" from us, in the ordinary meaning of the term, being manifested only by ultraliminal sense-impressions. We should then respond to changes in such manifestations more readily than to changes in the ultraliminal appearances of individuals who have no specially intimate relations with us.

Phantasms of the dead may perhaps, if discarnate spirits continue to exist, be due in some cases to causes similar to those we have been discussing. But there is an alternative explanation here. The effects of all actions, physical and otherwise, are propagated outward through space and onward through time in continuous and unending sequence. Hence it is possible for an individual to produce effects distant in space and time from the situation of his body. The mind transcends space and time, but its material manifestation is in some sense present in every element of space-time. Hence phantasms of the dead cannot be accepted as evidence of survival of death, especially in the case of those apparitions which, when they are seen, appear to follow invariably certain routine actions with no definite aim. In the case of communicating apparitions, however, the presumptive evidence is greater, for they provide an example precisely analogous to telephonic communication. Our evidence of the identity of these apparitions consists of certain sights and (perhaps) sounds, but (generally) not contacts. In the case of the telephone, the evidence of the identity of the person at the other end of the line consists of certain sounds but neither sights nor contacts.

There remains a third possibility, namely that phantasms, either of the dead or of the living, may sometimes be due to telepathic action, that is the projection of an image of himself from the mind of one individual to the mind of another. But what is telepathy? It is experienced as the occurrence of the same thought or the same image to two different people at the same time, separated by a distance which may be very great. It does not seem to be dependent on any form of material radiation such as is implied in the "brain-wave" theory, for apparently it does not obey the same laws (particularly the "inverse square" law) as are obeyed by material radiation. We get a clue to its nature when we consider how it is distinguished from perception. When two subjects, A and B, interact, each perceives the appearance of the other, but the two appearances thus perceived will of course be different. The activities of A and B are thus reciprocal, but of different forms. On the other hand, when telepathy occurs between A and B the *same* thought or image is present to each. In this case the form of activity is therefore the same for each, and we have, not reciprocity, but community of action. Perception and telepathy are thus complementary aspects of the reality

constituted by the plurality in unity of individual spirits. Perception is the expression, through reciprocal interaction, of the reality of spirits as distinct individual entities; telepathy is the expression, through community of action, of the reality of spirits as members of a common universe. Hence it would follow that every thought or action of each spiritual being is accompanied by a tendency to the same activity in all other spiritual beings, though in general this tendency would be prevented from passing into reality by other conflicting tendencies. Yet it seems likely that telepathy would occur far more often than we suspect, and there is no reason to believe that this is not the case. At least it is probable that our influence in the world for good or evil is not limited to the effects of our outward behaviour, and this influence would have its basis in telepathic action. It may be noted here that our hypothesis is partially confirmed by the fact that a more or less passive attitude of mind seems to be the most favourable for the occurrence of telepathy; for it would follow from our theory that telepathic influence would be most effective when the individual is not strongly expressing his own individuality through his activity, but is moving with the universal stream.

Another kind of evidence for survival of bodily death is alleged to be provided by automatic speech and automatic writing. There can be little doubt that the products of these processes frequently proceed from the subconsciousness of the medium. Indeed, little being known of the extent of the latter except that it is very great, we cannot admit the evidentiality of communications when the medium is entranced, for in this case thereseems to be no possibility of ruling out altogether the influence of the subconscious. This consideration disposes of the value of much automatic writing and of all automatic speech (for here the medium seems always to be entranced), as evidence of survival. But automatic writing when the medium is not entranced is on a very different footing, for here the medium may carry on one original line of thought or action while his hand is writing down the expression of another, and quite different, original line of thought, of which he is quite unconscious. Now it is possible for a person to do two things at once and to be conscious of the one and unconscious of the other, but only provided the latter is not original but a matter of mechanical routine. It is also possible, by rapid oscillation of attention, for the same subject to carry on two original lines of action at the same time,

but in this case he is necessarily quite conscious of both. But it is *not* possible for one subject to carry on two *original* lines of action simultaneously, and to be quite conscious of the one while quite unconscious of the other. Such an occurrence implies two foci of attention, and this implies two subjects. Whether the additional agent is a discarnate spirit or not, is a matter which can be settled only by empirical evidence in particular cases. But at any rate it follows that automatic writing, when the medium is not entranced, provides one of the most convincing kinds of evidence of survival we possess. Moreover, communications through entranced mediums, though weak in their own right, may sometimes possess a high degree of corroborative strength when taken in conjunction with communications from mediums who are not entranced.

Finally we may briefly consider that interesting class of phenomena termed "physical," and including all such occurrences as levitations, rappings, and materializations; or, in other words, physical effects which seem to be due to psychical causes. In all such processes the presence of a medium is apparently essential. Experimental work has disclosed the presence of a single basic principle running through all

phenomena of this type. The late Dr Crawford succeeded in showing that the relations between the weight of a levitated table and the changes in weight of the medium obeyed the same physical laws as those operative when a person lifts a table in the ordinary way; in particular, action and reaction were found to be equal and opposite when the medium was seated in a weighing chair, slight variations from equality being attributable to the influence of other persons in the room possessing slight mediumistic powers, this influence being exerted sometimes in the same and sometimes in the opposite direction to that of the principal medium, for it was found that the weight of the latter increased by an amount sometimes slightly greater and at other times slightly less than the weight of the levitated table. Crawford also succeeded in obtaining photographs and other evidence of a peculiar kind of matter (now known as the "ectoplasm") which seemed to issue from the body of the medium and to circulate through the séance-room.

More recently Schrenck-Notzing, in his experiments on materialization, has obtained further evidence of the existence of the ectoplasm, through the moulding and direction of which levitation, rappings, and materialization all seem to be effected in accordance

with physical laws such as the equality of action and reaction (referred to above) and the conservation of mass. But the ectoplasm, though it may be fairly described as belonging to the genus matter, apparently possesses some properties different (in degree if not in kind) from the properties possessed by other species of matter with which we are familiar.

The governing principle, of which we spoke above, which is at the root of all this, is therefore the fact that, so far as their immediate causes are concerned, the phenomena are purely physical in character (in some cases analogous to, and no more wonderful than, other forms of action at a distance, such as electric, magnetic, and gravitational forces) and therefore fall within the region of physical (including physiological) science for the purposes of experiment. But as regards their more ultimate causes, there remains the further question as to the nature of those entities who mould and direct the ectoplasm which is drawn from the medium. Although there exists a certain amount of evidence that these entities are discarnate spirits, it is not a question on which one would yet care to express a definite opinion, more data being needed.

It may be noted in passing that that class of hauntings which is sometimes known as "poltergeist" may probably be included among

physical phenomena, consisting as it does in movements of articles of furniture and so forth, and rappings or other noises, and apparently always centring round one particular person, who is probably the medium from whom the necessary material is drawn.

The importance of the phenomena we have been discussing, if they exist at all, can evidently not be over-estimated; and the body of evidence for their existence (apart from their explanation) is now so strong that it is the more difficult to understand the attitude of those people who refuse either to investigate for themselves or even to consider seriously the investigations of others, but continue to rely on dogmatic opinions which they are pleased arbitrarily to dignify by the title of "*a priori* necessities." What are really needed are an open mind and experiment, experiment, and more experiment, conducted in accordance with the usual rules of scientific procedure and with due precaution against fraud, to that end calling in the aid, if necessary, of expert professional conjurers. The promise of illuminating the hidden secrets of the universe which the phenomena hold forth, is well worth any trouble that may be expended in elucidating them.*

* The problems of psychical research are considered in detail in *Spiritual Pluralism*, Chap. VIII.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

We may now briefly summarize the results to which we have been led in the preceding chapters. The essential point of the world-view we have been developing and applying is the insistence first of all on spiritual being as the fundamental type of concrete existence, and secondly on the reality of individual spirits. Our view is, however, neither a pure pluralism nor a pure singularism or monism. We found it necessary to start from the standpoint of pluralism by asserting the reality of individual subjects or spirits and their interaction, without enquiring for the moment into the nature of the ground of that interaction. Pluralism will carry us a long way, but in applying it we are ultimately compelled to take account of the universal ground of interaction of spiritual beings. This brings us to the singularistic aspect of reality. Spirits are definitely real individuals, but they constitute a true universe, and not a mere disconnected

plurality, only in virtue of the immanence in them of a single, universal, concrete entity. We asserted the existence of this entity and drew conclusions therefrom, though it was not our purpose to elucidate its precise nature. Whether it is a being which in its essence corresponds to the ordinary conception of God (whatever that conception may be) is a further question of supreme importance, but beyond the scope of our present enquiry.

In support of our first contention, namely the reality and supremacy of spirit, it was possible to cite the recent change of attitude in the exponents of physical science consequent upon rapid and startling developments in the latter. In particular, the new philosophy of science, which owes its inception mainly to Mach and James, and its development to Whitehead and Russell, has finally overthrown the crude materialism of the last century, and certainly seems to favour the reality and power of spirit. It is true that Russell endeavours to frame a psychology out of images and sensations, dispensing with the subject of experience, but it is very doubtful whether anyone would admit that he has succeeded. It is also true that Whitehead asserts that his system of nature can be constructed without reference

to the mind; but the position in that system of what he calls the "percipient event" and the relation of mind (the existence of which he apparently admits) to the system as a whole, remain alike obscure. Indeed it is by no means improbable that whereas the internal relations of the system can perhaps be made intelligible without reference to mind, the relation of the system as a whole to mind may be of supreme importance in determining its character.

On the other hand, we noted a tendency on the part of some psychologists to regard the subject matter of their science as essentially physiological and therefore material. The school of thought which is developing from this tendency is now generally known as the "behaviourist" school. But while behaviourism is doubtless in many cases a very useful methodological principle, it is hardly possible to elevate it to the level of a serious metaphysical theory, and it is extremely unlikely that anyone would set about such a task at present.

In any case, modern thought is steadily moving towards a position which avoids most of the old difficulties that arose from dividing the world into two distinct and disparate substances, one called matter, and the other spirit. It is now beginning to be realized, not only that

the use made of the terms "matter" and "spirit" has been in the highest degree ambiguous, but that when these concepts are adequately analysed and an attempt made to discover what we really do mean when we use the terms, they are found to be closely connected, or even, in a certain sense, to merge into one another.

For our part, we found reasons for regarding spiritual beings as the type of substance or concrete existence, noting the difficulty of conceiving such existence except under the form of experience or consciousness, however rudimentary. We agreed with Lotze that an entity, if it is really to be something *in* itself, must be something *for* itself. Spirit is the supreme reality, matter being an abstraction from, or a construction of, the appearances by which spiritual beings are manifested to one another. These appearances were found to be characterized by certain qualities which might be termed "spatio-temporal," whereas spirits were recognized as reconciling in themselves the categories of change and permanence, the static and the dynamic, and hence transcending the limitations of space and time. It followed that the problem of immortality is really based on contradictory conceptions. Logically no such problem exists

so far as spirits are concerned, though there is a real problem, which can be stated in terms of experience, corresponding to the question of the survival of bodily death.

In a very real sense it also appeared that spirits might be regarded as "free" in perhaps the only significant sense of that term, namely as connoting *unique* individuals, each of whom is therefore in part self-determined.

Having thus developed our hypothesis as to the spiritual nature of reality, we found it possible to throw light by means of it on the problem of the relation of mind and body, for the latter was now seen to be, not an entity utterly disparate from the mind, but itself constituted by a community of spirits similar in essence, though differing in degree of development, from the mind or dominant spirit to whom the body belonged. Passing on from this we were also able to interpret in terms of our theory the fundamental aspects of mind—the conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious—which led us finally to the consideration of the nature of the results that might ensue from the interaction or intercommunication of spirit with spirit, which results form the subject-matter of the science of psychical research. In spite of the relatively unusual features of some of the phe-

nomena, we found no reason to believe that there were *a prioi* logical principles from which it necessarily followed that all witnesses testifying to the occurrence of the phenomena were either liars, dupes, or victims of hallucinations having no cause outside their own minds; and in no case did the phenomena conflict with our theory of the spiritual nature of reality.

In the opinion of the writer, the present century is likely to witness a synthesis and reconciliation of opposites in philosophical thought beyond comparison with anything of the kind in the past; and this resolution of differences will be in no small measure due to the silent pressure of a public opinion which is now becoming more and more ready to recognize the power of other influences and the desirability of other ends beside the purely material, as it advances further towards a comprehension of the reality and the supremacy of spiritual existence and spiritual values.

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